

*The*  
HEART  
*of*  
WASHINGTON



*Wayne Whipple*



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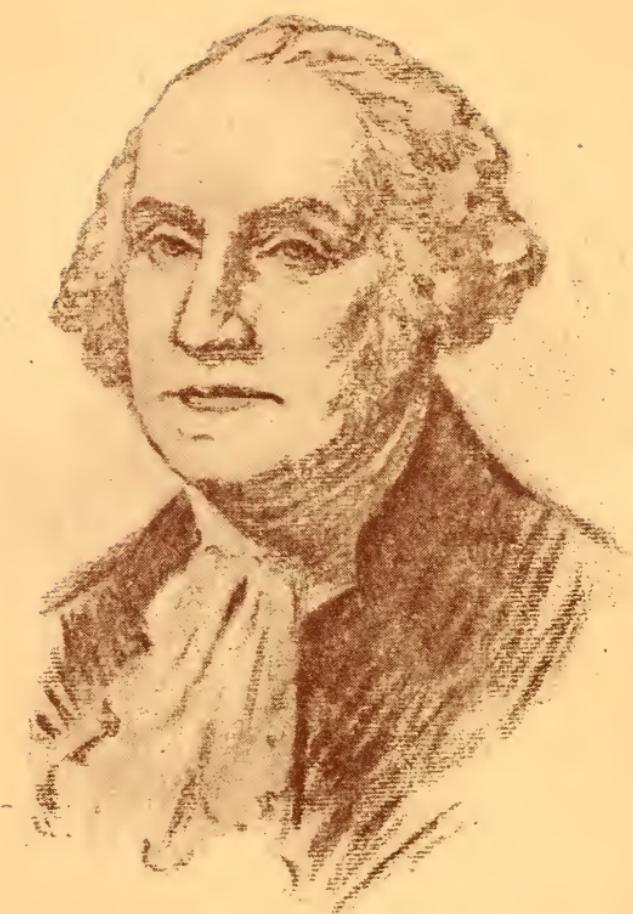
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## **THE HEART OF WASHINGTON**

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# THE HEART OF WASHINGTON

An Intimate Study of the Father of His  
Country from the Personal  
Human Side

By

**WAYNE WHIPPLE**

Author of "The Story Life of Washington"  
"The Heart of Lincoln," etc.



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# **THE HEART OF WASHINGTON**

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## **THE PETRIFIED GIANT OF AMERICAN HISTORY**

**A** little boy, on being held up to see President Washington, exclaimed: "Why, he's only a man!"

Washington, hearing this, smiled at the child and said, "Yes, dear, that is all."

Those who knew George Washington loved him very much as Lincoln's friends loved him, but Washington did not tell funny stories and his closest friends stood in awe of him. Yet Washington loved to laugh—often till the tears rolled down his face—once at least during his terrible experience at Valley Forge. He was fond of practical jokes—his cleverest strategic ruses

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were merely huge jests. He cracked a joke with General Knox while crossing the Delaware through that bitter Christmas night with the temperature below zero.

He laughed so heartily over a facetious story that he fell back in a helpless heap in a rowboat on the Hudson, and once at Mount Vernon, he threw himself down and rolled on the grass, choking in a spasm of merriment.

And he could weep, too! No great general in history was seen to cry so much as Washington—wringing his immense hands (Lafayette said he never saw such large hands on a human being), sobbing in helpless anguish—as at the loss of Fort Washington, while he was looking across the river through a spy-glass, watching the British with bayonets stabbing and killing his beloved soldiers.

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He was seen several times in a towering rage at the sight of treachery or rank injustice. Then, with white face and blazing eye, he would call upon God for vengeance. But he was a tender husband and a fond foster father; a staunch and forgiving friend; loyal and loving in all the relations of life.

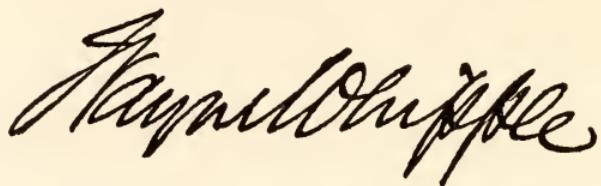
His first biographers, in their foolish attempts to make their hero appear to be more than human—a small prig instead of the real boy he was, and a pompous and coldly self-sufficient man, when his “offish” manner was often due to shyness—the result was a monumental image of the real Washington. Through the strange petrifying process they used in preserving his memory, they made of him the Stone Giant of American History.

So it is as the living, loving, Lincoln-like man, with real, warm—sometimes

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too hot—blood in his veins, that “The Heart of Washington” deals with the Father of his Country, to show him worthy of his real place not only “first in war” and “first in peace,” but also “first *in the hearts of his countrymen.*”

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jayme D. Shiffle". The signature is fluid and written in black ink on a light-colored background.

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## HIS FATHER'S HEART

On the 22nd of February, 1732, a little sunny-haired, blue-eyed boy was born to Captain Augustine Washington and his second wife, who had been Mary Ball, "the belle of Northern Virginia." Wakefield was the name of their estate, with a garden of honeysuckle and sweetbriar, sloping down to the broad Potomac. The house was a low story-and-a-half structure with a steep roof slanting almost to the ground behind, and a huge outside chimney at each end.

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They named the baby George. Lawrence and Augustine, or Austin, Captain Washington's sons by his first wife, were fourteen and twelve years older. They were soon sent "back home," as the colonists called England, to school, to "finish," as their father before them had done, in a boarding-school at Appleby, near Whitehaven, England.

This left Mary Washington to bring up her own little brood by themselves. Next after little George came "Betty," then Samuel, John Augustine, and Charles followed in quick succession; and last of all, Baby Mildred, who died in fourteen months. This was George Washington's first great sorrow.

Captain Washington was so called because he was a ship master. He owned several large plantations and was one of an English syndicate known as the Principio Company, owners of

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large iron mines and other interests in Virginia, of which he was a kind of general manager.

The Washingtons were not considered among the "F.F.V.'s," or first families of Virginia. The owners of the large estates along the Potomac were younger sons of noble families in England, and "at home" the Washingtons had belonged only to the minor gentry.

When George was three, his father moved from Westmoreland county to the Hunting Creek Place, fifty miles up the Potomac. There were three babies then, George, Betty, and Sam. On this slighty eminence (afterwards named Mount Vernon) was the home of George's early boyhood, where his father taught him his first lessons in truth-telling, respect for his elders, and love of God. It was here that the hatchet and cherry-tree incident is sup-

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posed to have occurred; also the growing of the cabbages to form the name

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to "startle" the little boy, and the good father showed him that, as his name could not spring up without a guiding hand, so the starry universe could not have been sown by chance.

It is known that Captain Washington was at home more than usual during George's early years and found keen satisfaction in his opportunity

"To rear the tender thought,  
To teach the young idea how to shoot."

And the man George Washington treasured those early lessons all his life, taking special pride in his resemblance to his father.

In the spring of 1739, while the fa-

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ther was absent, the house at Hunting Creek Place took fire from rubbish burning in the garden. As the house was high on the bluff, the slaves were unable to carry water up fast enough or in sufficient quantities to put it out. Mary Washington wasted no time in barren regrets. Ordering a few servants to help her get out some valuables and the best furniture, she proceeded to have the table set and dinner served in a near-by building.

So seven-year-old George had the excitement of a fire with an accompaniment of wails and prayers from the frightened negroes who stood helplessly by, wringing their hands. Then another removal, this time to Ferry Farm on the Rappahannock, opposite Fredericksburg, and nearer Captain Washington's iron works.

Here an ignorant one-eyed convict and church sexton, named Grove, kept

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a poor school, in a hut in a worn-out field then covered with undergrowth. Certain law-breakers in England were punished by being sent to Virginia. Grove's offense must have been slight or the neighborhood would not have trusted him in his double capacity.

The boys called their strange instructor "Hobby." He was able to teach George very little more than his letters, but after his small pupil became famous, according to Weems (perpetrator of the cherry-tree story, and similar anecdotes which are all called in question in this iconoclastic age), "Hobby" boasted that "'twas he who, between his knees, had laid the foundation of George Washington's greatness."

At first little George rode to school on the same horse with a negro servant, then, to his mother's constant alarm, Captain Washington gave the boy a pony of his own. At this time thrilling

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letters were received from Lawrence, who had finished school, and had been with Admiral Vernon and taken part in the attack on Cartagena, near the isthmus of Panama.

Little George, fired with the military spirit, became a leader in the daily battles fought at school. He chose to be captain of the "English" against "Frenchmen" or "Spaniards," or of the "white men" against "Indians." The leader of the opposition was a big boy named Bill Bustle.

With cornstalk guns and gourd drums the boys marched and reconnoitered. The pine undergrowth surrounding that "field school" lent itself best to Indian warfare, and the boys fought with bows and arrows. Of course their battles wound up in hand-to-hand encounters, with much pulling of hair and make-believe scalping with wooden knives.

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There is a story that, when George was about ten, their warfare took a modern turn, after a heavy snow-fall, with white forts and cannon-balls. The Bustle bully hit the white leader in the eye with a snowball in which he had packed a stone. George had to stay at home several days while his indignant mother poulticed her eldest hopeful's black eye. When she urged the lad's father to go to school and visit dire vengeance on that bad Bustle boy, the Captain shook his head:

"No, it's a boy's quarrel. George must learn to fight his own battles."

The boy needed no urging to do this. The first day he went back to school he tackled that Bustle, who was four or five years older than himself and nearly twice as large. Getting the big boy down, George pummeled him so vigorously that the poor fellow roared for mercy—"Enough!"—"Enough!" The

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little Washington boy, blinded and deafened by the treachery in that snow-coated stone, could see and hear nothing, but was determined to give the miserable sneak his deserts. It took several larger lads to pull the pale white boy off his begging enemy, and young Bustle seemed glad to escape with his life.

As a boy, George had the friendship of Richard Henry Lee, about his own age. To him the Washington boy wrote the following letter, it is said, in his eleventh year:

“DEAR DICKEY:

“I thank you very much for the pretty picture book you gave me. Sam asked me to show him the pictures, and I showed him all the pictures in it, and I read to him how the tame elephant took care of his master’s little boy, and put him on his back and would not let

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anybody touch his master's little son.  
I can read three or four pages without  
missing a word.

“I have a little piece of poetry about  
the picture book you gave me, but I  
mustn't tell who wrote the poetry.

“G. W.'s compliments to R. H. L.,  
And likes his book full well;  
Henceforth will count him his friend,  
And hopes many happy days he may spend.

“Your good friend,  
“GEORGE WASHINGTON.”

“Sam,” referred to in this letter, was  
George's next younger brother.

Captain Lawrence Washington, now  
twenty-four, came home from the war  
intending to return to England shortly,  
as an officer in the royal service. But  
he fell in love with Anne Fairfax, of  
Belvoir (pronounced “Beaver”), four  
miles below Hunting Creek Place,  
where the house had burned down three

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years before. The marriage was to take place in the spring of 1743, when Father Augustine Washington was seized with a sudden illness called gout of the stomach.

George had been allowed to go on a visit to two boy cousins twenty miles away. An account of the sudden end of his stay is given by Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, as though written by Ex-President Washington fifty years afterward:

“We were merry at supper when Peter, who was supposed to look after me, arrived with the news of my father’s sudden illness. It was the first of my too-many experiences of the ravages time brings to all men. I heard the news with a kind of awe, but without realizing how serious, in many ways, was this summons. I rode home behind Peter and found my mother in a state of distraction. She led me to the

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bedside of my father, crying out: ‘He is dying!’ The children were around him and he was groaning in great pain; but he kissed us in turn, and said to me,

“‘Be good to your mother.’

“I may say that throughout her life I have kept the promise I made him as I knelt crying, at his bedside. He died that night and I lost my best friend.”

## THE MOTHER-HEART

There was a great change in George's prospects when his father died. The estates were left largely to the two sons of the first wife. Hunting Creek Place and most of the mining interests, in fact the lion's share of the father's wealth, went to Lawrence according to English law and custom. Wakefield, where George was born, and other properties were willed to Augustine.

George was to receive, as his portion, Ferry Farm, opposite Fredericksburg. But Captain Washington stated in his will that the property bequeathed to the eldest son by his first wife should go to George, the eldest by his second "Venture," if Lawrence should die childless or if he should have an heir who died

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later. Sam, Jack, Charles, and Betty also received land, slaves, and money.

The young mother was to have and to hold the estates of her children in trust ten years, until George should become of age.

Mary Washington had sixteen hundred acres of her own, and received a special legacy from her husband, who seems to have tried to provide liberally for all the family, and as equally as the law allowed.

But the inward change in George's outlook was even greater than the outward, for, boy though he was, he showed those qualities of heart which, developing, made it possible to become a great man. His mother felt keenly the difference between Lawrence's condition and that of *her* eldest boy—although she was familiar with the legal custom when she became Captain Washington's second wife.

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She complained bitterly of her lot as a poor widow, and if George had been an ordinary lad he would have been jealous of his two half-brothers and they would doubtless have severed all relations with their querulous step-mother and half-brothers and sister. But neither of these things came to pass because of George's modest and manly heart.

The two older sons, being of age, took immediate possession of their estates. Lawrence married Miss Fairfax, who brought him more "gold and lands," and he built a new house where the old one had burned down at Hunting Creek Place, naming it Mount Vernon, for his adored friend the English admiral. It was through his marriage with a cousin of Lord Fairfax that the Lawrence Washingtons now came to be considered one of the "First Families of Virginia."

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Austin married Anne Aylett, the daughter of a wealthy Westmoreland planter, who added her good income to his, and they went at once to live at Wakefield.

**As for George,**

“In one short hour the boy became a man.”

Though only eleven, he was his mother's stand-by. In spite of her complaints and comparisons of his lot with those of his half-brothers, she failed to excite his envy, and he came and went between Mount Vernon and Wakefield on the most agreeable terms, both half-brothers being very fond of him.

Of course, George could not go to England to school, and his mother complained that she could not afford even to send him to William and Mary College in Virginia. Young as he was, the lad had the good sense to accept the lot of a younger son, content also because

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this was his father's will. He began at once to "help mother," and planned and worked with her for the younger children. He got the best part of his education in the university of adversity. He learned much from nature and observation. He had no special yearning for booklore, so he did not mind not being sent to England to school. He was willing to accept the quaint dictum of the day that "Mother Wit" could do more for him than "Mother Country," and that young men's morals were "finished" in England as well as their manners.

As "Hobby's" school was the best in the neighborhood of Ferry Farm, George began to go about with servants, sailors, and transported convicts from England. He was now growing tall, awkward, a little hollow chested, and was developing a large nose and big hands and feet.

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He was passionately fond of horses, and a story is told of his breaking a vicious sorrel colt of his mother's. He mastered the animal, but it fell dead under him. Washington's adopted son relates this circumstance with all the grandiloquence of Plutarch's description of young Alexander the Great mastering Bucephalus. Just such ridiculous attempts to make ordinary acts "sound" heroic, and more than human, have removed the real Washington from the love and sympathy of real boys and men.

The half-brothers, seeing George running wild, begged his mother to let him live with one of them and go to school. Though Mary Washington bewailed her inability to send him abroad, she was loath to let him go away even a few miles and attend school under a brother's care. It is a luminous commentary on George's manly disposition

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and behavior that he already had four homes thrown open to him, the occupants of which all seemed anxious to have George stay—at his mother's, Mount Vernon, Wakefield, and Belvoir.

The mother finally yielded and let the boy go to Austin's, on account of a good school at Oak Grove, four miles from Wakefield, kept by a master named Williams. This was a great sacrifice for the whole family, as George was kind to the younger children and they adored him. There was always a special comradeship between him and "Sister Betty," who grew to resemble him; and Washington's longest letters, as commander-in-chief, were addressed to "Dear Brother Jack."

George was allowed to go only on condition that he should ride home, a distance of about twenty miles, every few weeks over Sunday. To him the chief attraction at Wakefield was his

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brother's fine stable of thirty horses. He had one horse as his own for the gallop to and from school. Here he took a practical or business course. Young as he was, and fond of outdoor sports, he studied diligently to make up for lost time. A schoolmate told that, while all the other boys "were playing at bandy and other games, George was behind the door ciphering."

The lank, overgrown, round-shouldered youth was shy with the girls, but "hail, fellow, well met" with the boys. He excelled in running, climbing, and throwing. As at "Hobby's," he was a leader here, and sometimes was asked to act as umpire in the other boys' quarrels.

In the school-room George showed a fondness for arithmetic, but he cared nothing for grammar, and was always a poor speller, though he studied hard to correct these defects, even after he became President of the United States!

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As he enjoyed any employment which kept him out of doors, he was happy in carrying the chain for Mr. Williams's surveying class, as they measured the meadows along Bridge's creek.

The schoolmaster gave George a book called "The Youth's Companion," a collection of recipes, directions, problems in surveying, rules of etiquette—a sort of memorandum and handy book.

During the year or more he spent at Wakefield, George increased in devotion to and admiration for Austin, a wholesome, sturdy, good-natured sort of brother, who took the boy with him sometimes on fishing and hunting trips.

But the Widow Washington fretted over the long absence of her eldest son. So it was decided that George should return to Ferry Farm, and go to a school in Fredericksburg across the river. Here the Rev. Mr. Marye, rec-

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tor of the Church of England, took a few pupils in “Latin, French, and deportment.” About half his time in his fifteenth year was spent with his mother, going from Ferry Farm to Fredericksburg to school, and the other half at Mount Vernon with Brother Lawrence and his wife.

With Mr. Marye George learned a little Latin and afterwards expressed regret that he had not improved this opportunity of studying French with this Huguenot minister. The memorable thing he learned with Pastor Marye was more than a hundred “Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation.”

Here are several of the rules, as he copied them:

“Keep your Nails clean and Short, also your Hands and Teeth Clean yet without showing any great Concern for them.”

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“Let your Discourse with Men of Business be Short and Comprehensive.”

“Strive not with your Superiors in argument, but always Submit your Judgment with Modesty.”

“Undertake not what you cannot Perform but be Careful to keep your Promise.”

“Speak not Evil of the absent for it is unjust.”

“Let your Recreations be Manfull not Sinfull.”

“Labour to keep alive in your Breast that Little Spark of Celestial fire called Conscience.”

While going to school at Rector Marye's, George made the acquaintance of two boys in Fredericksburg named Crawford. These sturdy fellows became well-known heroes among pioneers and Indian fighters. In them young Washington found “foemen worthy of his steel” in wrestling and

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other athletics. With them he developed the wonderful grasp of his powerful hand and learned a trick or two that he had occasion to use later, with telling effect. The companionship of these youthful heroes was an excellent substitute for that of the grooms, convicts, and slaves with whom he had lately consorted.

There was little for a youth of George's practical turn to learn with the Huguenot clergyman, for he needed strength for the struggles of life, rather than the superficial finish of a "gentleman farmer." Honest labor was so despised that a young man who had to earn his own living was not considered a fit associate for the gambling, guzzling, horse-racing, cock-fighting scions of the so-called gentry of that region.

His older brothers were anxious to have him enter a creditable career, and

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of course the mother wished to see him the equal of his friends and relatives in respectability. She had a deep-seated dread of poverty, but it was not so strong as the mother-fear that something might separate her darling boy from her.

Captain Lawrence Washington, who had some influence with Admiral Vernon and English generals, proposed to use it in George's behalf to secure him a place as midshipman in the British navy. This might lead him to a good "berth," and a lad of such parts could prove a hero and climb high on the ladder of life.

George had heard tales of war, adventure, and pirates, and had been fired with a great desire for "a life on the ocean wave," so when he and Lawrence came home to Ferry Farm and told Mother Washington of all the financial and other benefits the whole family

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might derive from George's securing a good position, she gave her reluctant consent.

The two brothers, surprised and elated, hurried back to Mount Vernon to make preparations. They were no sooner gone than the poor mother was in a frenzy of despair over having yielded to their persuasions. She was in a dilemma. Too proud to take back her promise, she wrote to her brother, Joseph Ball, a London lawyer, telling him her trouble. Then she waited six months, between hope and fear, for something to prevent this lifelong separation and save her heart from breaking. She hoped to hear from him before they received the reply from the British admiralty.

At last the long-looked-for letter came. Uncle Joseph declared against the whole project. They would rob and cheat the boy, "and cut and slash

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and use him like a negro, or rather like a dog."

It was just the sort of advice the widow wanted. She now had a lawyer and a man of the world on her side. She lost no time in driving to Mount Vernon and laying the letter before the brothers.

The old lawyer had assumed that George could only get a place before the mast as a common sailor, while Lawrence had applied for a position as midshipman and had secured the appointment without delay. George had tried on his new uniform and his little sea-going box was already on board a man-of-war then anchored in the Potomac. Although Uncle Ball's letter read as though he had received his information about George's going to sea from another quarter, the two brothers must have suspected the real source—it came so opportunely for the mother. But

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George maintained a respectful silence about this.

When the difference between a common sailor-boy and a midshipman, entered with influential backing, was explained, the poor mother lost all her pride and reserve. Breaking down, she began to sob and beg her son not to forsake his forlorn mother in her loneliness. To Lawrence this was truly exasperating, for she had given her consent, and they had gone ahead and made all the necessary arrangements. The appointment was highly flattering and the tall lad's blue-gray eyes had sparkled with hope and pride as he tried on the bright uniform of the royal navy.

George thought of it all—and the chest on board the great ship of war. He thought of his bright hopes—his only chance for the brave career he yearned for so ardently. But provoking and unreasonable as it all seemed,

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he could not go away and leave his mother weeping like that. With burning eyes and a lump in his throat, he renounced his high hopes to humor her. He yielded to his mother's tears—not to his uncle's officious, patronizing letter.

The little trunk was sent for and removed from the ship just in time. The crisp uniform was folded away never to be worn. The man-of-war sailed down the broad river in the halo of a radiant future, leaving a disappointed boy choking down his sobs, in such a gloom as only a life-disappointment can bring to an ambitious youth. That was a heroic sacrifice—like a martyrdom—to crush his own young heart to save his mother's.

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After that bitter self-renunciation George was allowed to stay at Mount Vernon most of the time. Lawrence did all he could to make up the cost of “the grand refusal” to the heart-broken lad. George had several tutors, and in the old yellow pages of his cash account may still be seen this quaint entry:

“To cash pd y<sup>e</sup> Musick Master  
for my Entrance                            3/9”,

This “Musick Master” could not have been a private tutor. George never showed much ability in music, and cared but little for quavers and semi-quavers, but there were pretty girls to be seen in the neighborhood singing-school. To his dying day he was devoted to young

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women, but so bashful that he would rather face any number of loaded cannon than a “battery of bright eyes.”

The brothers would have been glad to share with George and so let him lead an idle, “respectable” life, but he already possessed a supreme contempt for snobbery, and felt, since his father’s death, a certain manly responsibility as the head of his mother’s family. He was not satisfied to seek his own comfort and enjoyment and leave her to struggle on alone.

His brothers passed their time superintending their plantations, and other business affairs, but they indulged in the sports of the time, fox-hunting, horse-racing, drinking and gambling, as the landed gentry of England did, but in moderation.

Among the tutors Lawrence had employed was a pioneer scout and surveyor, who taught George that higher

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branch of mathematics, giving him field practice as well as the mechanical drawing necessary for platting.

While living at Lawrence's, George often rode to Belvoir. Here he met Lord Fairfax, a distinguished member of court society in England, who had banished himself to his vast estates in Virginia, because a too-ambitious English lady had jilted him to marry a duke. He was a confirmed woman-hater, and George's shyness towards the fair sex found in him a ready sympathy. Other bonds of fellowship were also found to exist between the old nobleman and Widow Washington's son.

William Fairfax, master of Belvoir, father of Lawrence Washington's wife, was Lord Fairfax's cousin, and manager of that nobleman's estates; so George was welcomed by the Fairfax family as a sort of connection by marriage, and the old Englishman was at-

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tracted by the sturdy manhood of the young American. He talked with George of life at Oxford, of meeting royalty, and of dining with Addison, then the greatest literary light in England.

He guided the youth's reading, and the two went out together, often fox-hunting and riding home in silence after an exciting chase. His lordship, having found too many women along the coast, and being an ardent lover of nature, had sighed "for a lodge in some vast wilderness," and built, in the beautiful Shenandoah valley, a modest house which he named Greenway Court. This was in the heart of his wilderness possessions. Here he lived alone, much of the time, except for a few faithful servants.

But in spite of his noble friend's warnings against women, George's heart was too young and susceptible to

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be turned against all the lovely girls he knew. It was the fashion for young men to write love verses and address them to their special fair ones. George Washington did this and also wrote letters to male cousins and friends about a certain "Lowland Beauty," but no one knows with certainty who she was.

And the love-lines he wrote! Here is a sample:

"Oh, ye gods! why should my poor resistless heart  
Stand to oppose thy might and power?  
At last surrender to Cupid's feather'd dart  
And now lies bleeding every hour  
For her that's pitiless of my grief and woes  
And will not on me pity take;  
He sleeps amongst my most inveterate foes  
And with gladness never wish to wake—"

And so on and on and on. As this seems not to have been sent to any particular object of his affection, it is thought George took to writing verse because all young men, mostly older

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than he, were doing this—as the modern boy of fourteen to sixteen goes in for collecting stamps till he tires of the fad.

## THE TWO ELDER BROTHERS

Lord Fairfax encouraged George to make a practical use of his knowledge of surveying; he doubtless looked down on the idleness of the wild and foolish young men of Virginia. Of course, such an honorable authority as the sixth Baron Fairfax soon convinced the older brothers that it was quite right and proper for George, as a younger son, to become a practical surveyor. But the yearning mother still opposed it. It was a dangerous calling which meant work in distant wilds among "squatters," or random settlers, who looked on surveyors as sent by the English proprietors to take their lands and homes from them. Then there were Indians, often hostile and treacherous, besides

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swollen rivers, rattlesnakes and wild beasts. Above all it would take her precious boy away from her for months at a time. But Lord Fairfax sent George out to survey his own great estates and paid him handsomely for his services. With the Washington lad, only sixteen then, went George William Fairfax, several years older. The two youths had Surveyor Genn with them, as guide and manager.

Though the excursion was beset with many difficulties and dangers, the two Georges, buoyed up by youthful spirits (though George Washington had been suffering from a bilious attack), went through it with the enthusiasm that brings success. The Washington lad kept a diary of this surveying expedition, making sage comments on the conditions he found, and recording their experiences with settlers, Indians and others, especially jokes against himself,

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—how he shot at two turkeys and missed them both. Here is an extract from his quaint record of his first surveying trip which he called:—

“A Journal of My Journey over the Mountains, Begun Friday, the 11th of March, 1747–8.”

“Sunday, March 13th. Rode to his lordship’s quarters. About four miles higher up the river Shenandoah we went through most beautiful groves of sugar trees, and spent the best part of the day in admiring the trees and the richness of the land. . . .

“15th. Worked hard till night, and then returned. After supper we were lighted into a room, and I, not being as good a woodsman as the rest, stripped myself very orderly, and went into the bed, as they called it, when to my surprise I found it to be nothing but a lit-

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tle straw matted together without sheet or anything else, but only one threadbare blanket, with double its weight of vermin, such as lice, fleas, &c (!)

“I was glad to get up (as soon as the light was carried from us) and put on my clothes and lie as my companions did. Had we not been very tired, I am sure we should not have slept much that night.”

There was one experience he did not record, probably because the joke was not on himself. Surveyor Genn had met, during a previous scout or survey, an Indian chief named Big Bear, who had an awful hand-grasp, and delighted in shaking hands with an unwitting “paleface,” making the bones crack, and grinning with fiendish glee over the white man’s agony. So Genn warned the members of his party against trusting Big Bear if they should meet him.

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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George said nothing, but remembered a trick he had learned with the Crawford boys in Fredericksburg. When that wily chief presented his sinewy paw with the usual Indian greeting, "How?" Washington seized it with an innocent look, and said "How?" with great cordiality.

The astonished Indian, caught in his own trap, fairly roared with pain, and the delighted bystanders, Indians as well as white men, danced with joy to see "the biter bitten" at last, and writhing with the very agony he had inflicted on others.

The struggle for the right to earn his own living was George Washington's first war for independence. This freedom from dependence was sweet to him as he returned from his first surveying trip, a happy young conqueror of sixteen. He had earned from eighteen to twenty-four dollars *per diem*—very

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high wages for that day and generation! The first thing he did was to go with George Fairfax to Belvoir and report to his distinguished employer. His lordship was pleased with everything, especially with the lad's "Journal" of the excursion.

The satisfaction of one great landed proprietor meant recommendations that would bring engagements from others, and it was with a light heart that young George Washington went home to tell his mother all about it, and have a happy romp with the younger children, for "bouncing Betty" was enough like her big brother George to be a boon companion.

The next year, at the age of seventeen, Washington received from William and Mary College, at Williamsburg, the colonial capital of Virginia, a commission as surveyor of Culpeper County.

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While in the western wilds he wrote the following letter to his friend Richard Henry Lee:

“DEAR RICHARD:

“The receipt of your kind favor of the 2nd instant afforded me unspeakable pleasure, as it convinces me that I am still in the memory of so worthy a friend—a friendship I shall ever be proud of increasing. Yours gave me the more pleasure, as I received it among barbarians and an uncouth set of people.

“Since you received my letter of October last, I have not slept above three or four nights in a bed, but after walking a good deal all day, I have lain down before the fire upon a little hay, straw, fodder or a bearskin, whichever was to be had, with man, wife and children, like dogs and cats; and happy is he who gets the berth nearest the fire!

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“Nothing could make it pass off tolerably but a good reward. A doubloon is my constant gain every day that the weather will permit of my going out, and sometimes six pistoles. [A doubloon is a double pistole, and a pistole was worth about four dollars in modern money.]

“The coldness of the weather will not permit of my making a long stay, as the lodging is rather too cold for the time of the year. I never had my clothes off, but have lain and slept in them, except the few nights I have been in Frederickstown.”

The pilgrimages of the seventeen-year-old County Surveyor into western wilds became fewer and farther between, for Lawrence's health seemed to be failing fast, and the invalid yearned to have Brother George with him more and yet more. It was a beautiful

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friendship which existed between these two, for the younger was

“Brother, at once, and son.”

Lawrence seems to have known that he was not long for this world, for, between trips in vain search for health, he kept planning for the future of his wife and baby daughter—and for George, to whom he clung as a sick man does to the young, well and strong. As a last resort he decided to spend the winter in Barbados, and no one but George would he take with him.

Some time before this Lawrence had resigned as an officer in the Virginia militia, and recommended that George take his place, and the youth was duly appointed district adjutant-general, ranking major, with a salary, in modern money, of seven hundred and fifty dollars a year. The young major was given lessons in handling the broad-

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sword and in fencing by an officer named Van Braam, who had been with Lawrence in the war, and he pursued military studies under Adjutant Muse, another officer acquaintance. Young Major Washington's duties consisted in making tours through several counties, and inspecting drills, arms and accouterments of the Colonial militia.

But he had to give up surveying and militia duties to accompany his brother on the voyage in hopeless search of health. They sailed on the 28th of September, 1751, George being nineteen and Lawrence thirty-three years of age.

George kept a diary on this voyage. There was little interest beyond the daily symptoms of the invalid. On the day of their arrival, after a passage of five weary weeks, they were entertained by the governor of Barbados, and George was exposed to smallpox. He was ill nearly four weeks, losing his

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fresh, youthful complexion, and his skin was left pitted. Till his death he bore the marks of that governor's hospitality.

Lawrence had the ups and downs common to those in the last stages of consumption. He decided to try a change at Bermuda, sending George home to bring Anne, his wife, to meet him on that island. But before they sailed from Virginia they received word not to come, for Lawrence was now "hurrying home to his grave." He reached Mount Vernon in the spring of 1752, and died in July. George, though only twenty, was the real executor of his brother's will. He did his part faithfully and well.

When he was twenty-one he declined to disturb his mother in the possession of Ferry Farm, which had been left to him by his father, although at that time he did not know that another estate was soon to be his. Lawrence's little

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daughter died in 1754, and thereupon Lawrence's beautiful home passed into his brother's possession. Thus at two and twenty, George Washington, tall and handsome, after manifold struggles through boyhood and youth, became the wealthy master of Mount Vernon.

## **“THE HERO’S HEART”**

Among the interests of the two older Washington brothers was that of the Ohio Company, of which Lawrence had been president. This was an English syndicate holding certain rights along the Ohio, now included in the States of West Virginia and southeastern Ohio, which were encroached upon by the French, coming down from Canada and settling along that river. The Indians occupying the disputed territory took sides; those allying themselves with the French were known as “French Indians.”

Robert Dinwiddie, governor of Virginia, was also interested in the Ohio Company. He appointed the young adjutant-general, then only twenty,

## “THE HERO’S HEART”

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special envoy from the English and instructed him to take to the French commander a “notice to quit” the country. Major Washington thought his appointment a mistake, for Indians have great respect for age, and he felt that the French officers, some of whom were Indian half-breeds, would laugh to scorn a message from Great Britain delivered by “almost a boy.” As a military officer it was his “not to reason why.” It was not fear of losing his life that made young Washington hesitate, but he was afraid of failing in the attempt through his own unfitness.

George was not yet twenty-one at that time, and he dreaded the parting with his mother on such a dangerous errand more than encountering a whole village of hostile savages. She objected, of course—almost any mother would. When his mere personal ambition was involved, he had given up a

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bright future for her sake, but now he was an officer of the government, and his country called on him to risk his life. It would be weakness to yield to her entreaties now, so he comforted her the best he could and left for Williamsburg.

On the 30th of October, 1753, the young envoy set out on a difficult and dangerous mission which was to affect the future history of two hemispheres, traveling on horseback or on foot, with a few scouts and an interpreter. It was a journey of hundreds of miles through pathless forests, deep with snows, and among hostile savages. He held pow-wows in Indian lodges, enlisting red men as guides and helpers. At an interview and supper in Venango, he kept his head while his French hosts were maudlin with drink and revealed the secret orders of their superiors. He had to go on, almost to Lake Erie, to deliver the governor's letter to Cheva-

## “THE HERO’S HEART”

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lier de St. Pierre, the highest officer south of Quebec.

While waiting for the Chevalier’s reply, the French tried to bribe his friendly Indians with liquor, guns and ammunition; but the boy diplomat, by tact, prowess and patience, brought away his allies in triumph, after having made secret drafts of the French fortifications. In his reply the Chevalier refused to vacate the lands occupied by the French.

On the return trip the strange embassy reached Venango in canoes, after several adventures. There the party separated, Major Washington sending the rest home on the horses, while he and Gist, a special scout, started out a shorter way on foot, through woods and deep snow, as he was anxious to deliver the message to Governor Dinwiddie without delay. No trails could be seen, so they engaged an Indian guide. He

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proved to be hostile, and Washington caught him in the act of aiming a gun at him. The young white man disarmed the Indian. Gist said there was no way but to kill the treacherous savage, for, if allowed to escape, he would follow them with others of his tribe and murder them. Reasonable as this seemed, George took the chance of losing his own life rather than shoot, in cold blood, a defenceless enemy.

They let the Indian go, to his great astonishment, and hurried blindly forward through deep drifts, though Major Washington was lame and suffering from blistered feet. They dared not encamp and rest that night, as they believed to do so would mean sure death. By morning they reached the Allegheny river, after a hideous night of sleepless apprehension. In his journal Washington wrote:

“There was no way for getting over

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but on a raft; which we set about with one poor hatchet. Before we were half way over we were jammed in the ice. The rapidity of the stream jerked me out into ten feet of water.”

This was far more disagreeable and dangerous than the crossing of the Delaware twenty-three years later. The young man caught the end of a log and scrambled back on the raft. The weather was below zero and a high wind was blowing.

The two fugitives reached a bleak island in the darkness and built a fire where Washington tried to dry his frozen clothing. Gist, long hardened to exposure, found in the morning that his fingers and toes were frozen. The next day they escaped to the opposite shore, where they were safe from pursuing Indians. They learned afterward that they must have had a narrow escape, as the pursuing savages, disap-

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pointed of their prey, killed and scalped a helpless family living near.

Major Washington purchased two horses and the two men, after more hardships and escapes, reached Williamsburg on the 16th of January, 1754, where the brave young messenger delivered Chevalier de St. Pierre's polite but unsatisfactory reply to Governor Dinwiddie.

## **“DRUM-BEAT—HEART-BEAT”**

The young ambassador had early developed that habit of putting things down, which goes far toward success in many walks of life. His boyish diary, describing his adventures in western wilds, was published, and found a wide and eager reading, not only among the American colonies, but in Great Britain and on the continent of Europe by monarchs, ministries, diplomats and people of the work-a-day world. In recognition of his services, Major Washington was promoted to second in command in Virginia, with the rank of colonel.

Governor Dinwiddie began at once, by writing letters and sending special messengers, to arouse the colonies to unite and fight those enemies of all, the

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French and their Indian allies. Assuming the initiative he also sent Captain Trent and a band of workmen to build a fort at the fork of the Ohio, designated by Washington to be the strategic point of all that region.

Trent failed to guard the fortifications, and one day, in his absence with troops, hundreds of French and Indians landed in canoes and swarmed up the bank. The few men working on the unfinished fort were helpless. As they offered no resistance, they were allowed to leave unmolested, taking their building tools with them.

They found their way to Colonel Washington, who had been sent after Trent as soon as a company could be organized for the purpose, and was approaching to protect and secure the fortress. It was a deep chagrin to the young officer to lose this point of vantage to his country through stupid neg-

## **“DRUM-BEAT—HEART-BEAT”**

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lect. Of course, it was useless now to advance to the forks of the Ohio, where the French were already completing a larger work, which they named Fort Duquesne.

Gist, the scout who had acted as guide on his expedition through this region the year before, came to report that foreign soldiers' tracks had been seen in the neighborhood. Then the Indian chief known as the Half-King, who had been one of the motley embassy the year before, and who was approaching to join Washington again, sent word that a French scouting party of fifty men had been tracked to a secluded glen in the woods.

Setting out at dead of night from Great Meadows, with about fifty soldiers, including Indian guides, Washington led his men, single file, groping, stumbling, jostling one another, through a pouring rain, till they sur-

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rounded the hidden French camp where even the sentry was asleep beside the sputtering fire.

The French camp “woke to hear the sentry shriek” and stumbled about, grabbing for their guns. By the flickering firelight they saw the tall young leader standing in the foreground against the inky blackness, and heard him cry, “Fire!”

Although bullets whistled around him, Colonel Washington was not hit. In fifteen minutes the French had surrendered; their leader, Jumonville, had been slain with nine of his men. Only one of Washington’s men was killed, and two or three wounded. The Virginia colonel courteously offered the two officers among the French prisoners all the dry clothing he had, though he himself was drenched to the skin.

This was Washington’s first battle. In a letter to his brother Jack he wrote

## “DRUM-BEAT—HEART-BEAT”

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exultingly, because he had learned that real danger could not make him afraid:

“I have heard the bullets whistle, and, believe me, there is something charming in the sound.”

When this remark was reported to George the Second of England, the king replied:

“He would not say so if he had been used to hear many.”

The French tried to make it appear that Jumonville and his men were on a peaceful expedition, and had been treacherously murdered in the dark by Washington and his cowardly crew.

At Great Meadows he built a low log-enclosure which they named Fort Necessity. Meanwhile Colonel Fry, first in command, had died on his way thither. So young Washington was now head of the Virginia forces. Recruits formerly under Fry soon reached Fort Necessity with a regiment of In-

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dependents from South Carolina. They called themselves Independents because they were paid by the crown, and better dressed, fed and drilled, than the hastily gathered company from Virginia. Their captain refused to take orders from Colonel Washington. The men from South Carolina would not work in building roads or the fort. They said they were neither diggers nor woodsmen, but soldiers.

Colonel Washington bore these trials with all the patience at his command. He could not endure to see his faithful soldiers work while the "independent" loafers merely looked on or jeered at those who were working, so he ordered the Virginia troops to go forward felling trees and cutting roads, while the Carolina men remained at ease near the unfinished fort. When the Virginians had advanced twelve miles, their leader learned that a large body of French

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were coming down the river under command of Coulon de Villiers, brother of Jumonville, vowing dire vengeance upon “the cruel Washington” and his murderous gang. The Virginia colonel sent for the Independents’ officers, and after a council of war, decided to return to the fort. Now with the enemy less than a day off, the Independents worked on the fortification they had been too proud to finish, as if it were their last day on earth—as it proved to be for many of them!

On the morning of the 3d of July, 1754, the French and Indians surrounded their log enclosure. The Independents, ready to fight now that the enemy was in sight, must have regretted their foolishness. As in the previous battle, there was a heavy downpour of rain. Washington ordered them within the roofless fortress, where they were huddled together in a miserable plight.

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The rain wet their ammunition so that they could not discharge their muskets. They stood knee deep in mud and water, and had nothing to eat but raw beef.

The Half-King, seeing that it was to be a losing fight, refused to take part, and withdrew his braves to a safe distance. In excuse for this he announced that he was disgusted with the idleness of the Independents, and that Washington was to blame for allowing it. He added this insult to his injury: "The French are cowards and the English fools!"

Finally, greatly outnumbered and unable to fight, Colonel Washington accepted a call to surrender. He had occasion here to regret that he had not learned French. He sent Van Braam to confer with de Villiers. That Dutchman returned with terms of capitulation for Colonel Washington to

## **“DRUM-BEAT—HEART-BEAT”**

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sign. Depending on this interpreter's translation, he signed a document which stated that he had assassinated Jumonville!

According to this agreement, the young commander was permitted to march out of Fort Necessity with drums beating and colors flying—on July 4th, 1754—twenty-two years before the Declaration of Independence.

## BRADDOCK'S AIDE

After “snatching victory from the jaws of defeat,” the young commander-in-chief returned to Mount Vernon—now his own—a military hero, and an object of increased admiration among the fair sex. His friend Fairfax wrote him:

“If a Saturday night’s rest cannot be sufficient to enable your coming hither to-morrow, the ladies will try to get horses to equip our chair, or attempt their strength on foot [four miles] to salute you, so desirous are they with loving speed to have an ocular demonstration of your being the same identical gent (!) that lately departed to defend his country’s cause.”

The modest young master of Mount

## BRADDOCK'S AIDE

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Vernon had opened the Seven Years' War in Europe. The Virginia House of Burgesses saw no reason for reproaching him, handicapped as he had been, but thanked him for his bravery in both battles, and voted a pistole (about four dollars) apiece to his soldiers.

Govenor Dinwiddie began, in a stupid, exasperating way, to complicate the opening conflict. The young commander became involved in bickerings and other annoyances on account of the governor's favorites. Meanwhile England sent General Braddock over to fight the French and their Indian allies. Washington was invited to be one of his *aides*. The young Colonel did his best to get the arrogant English general to see the folly of fighting Indians and half-breeds by Continental methods. Braddock replied loftily that such savage soldiers might defeat American

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troops but they would take to their heels at the sight of the red uniform of the British regulars.

From Wills's Creek Colonel Washington was sent to Williamsburg to bring four thousand pounds (about \$20,000) to pay the troops. An escort of eight men was detailed to convoy the iron chest containing the gold. Of their courage he wrote:

"Eight men were two days assembling, but I believe they would not have been more than as many seconds dispersing if I had been attacked."

The Virginian was almost ill over the slow progress of Braddock and his army. After his return with the treasure chest he wrote in confidence, to his brother:

"I found that instead of pushing on with vigor, without regarding a little rough road, they were halting to level every molehill, and to erect bridges over

## BRADDOCK'S AIDE

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every brook, by which means we were four days in getting twelve miles."

This "creeping paralysis" seems to have affected the stalwart colonel's nerves. He lapsed into a raging fever and had to be carted through the forest in a lumbering wagon. He was finally left behind with a physician, too ill to be moved farther. The fear lest he should fail to be "in at the death" after all, made him slip out, more dead than alive, and ride furiously after the army. He caught up just in time to dash into the thickest of a battle. He had lost his hat, and his pallor and hollow, fever-lighted eyes made his face look like a frantic death's-head.

The Indians, superstitious of all strange manifestations, and especially of insanity, were afraid of him. He rode like a demon, reckless of whistling bullets and flying tomahawks. In spite of everything, Braddock formed his troops

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in platoons, where they were crowded together, without elbow room, their bright red uniforms a shining mark for French and savages who surrounded them and shot them down like so many manikins.

Dazed by the devilish din all around them, the English regulars stood a few moments, only to see their comrades falling on every side—then they broke and ran in all directions, shot down, or tomahawked and scalped, without making the least resistance. There were only two hundred French soldiers and six hundred Indians, but they killed seven hundred English regulars, of whom eighty-six were officers. Brad-dock himself was mortally wounded, and died cursing his stupid obstinacy in not following his young *aide's* advice. The only real fighting done that day was by those objects of British sneers, the “raw American militia.”

## BRADDOCK'S AIDE

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So many of the officers were killed or wounded that as soon as Braddock fell the Virginia colonel took command and allowed the men to fight Indian fashion. He dashed hither and thither, with such utter abandon that the Indians thought he was charmed by magic so that they could not hit him. He had two horses shot under him and four bullets through his coat. He cursed the frantic regulars and struck them with the flat of his sword, but it was useless; they were too frightened to fight with "devils straight from hell."

Of their conduct Washington wrote:  
"The dastardly behavior of the regular troops (so-called) exposed those who were inclined to do their duty to almost certain death. I tremble at the consequence this defeat may have upon our back settlers."

The next day Colonel Washington, reared in the Church of England, read

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the burial service over the hollowed-out log in which the body of poor, pompous, insulting General Braddock was laid to rest. Then they beat a retreat to Fort Cumberland, lately erected on Wills's creek, from which place he wrote to his best beloved brother to correct a report of his death and burial, which sounds a little like Mark Twain's comment that the report of his own death was "grossly exaggerated!"

## “HEART OF MY HEART”

Late in July, 1755, Colonel Washington returned home, weak from fever, and smarting after undeserved defeat. But he was not allowed to rest. In the first place the wealthy young Virginia planter had added to his military laurels and had become a hero of the first order. He soon received an appointment as commander-in-chief of the Virginia forces. After Braddock's defeat, Indians went on the warpath all along the Ohio frontier, and appalling stories came to the eastern shore that the savages were “killing and destroying all before them,” and fleeing neighbors reported that when they left their homes they heard “constant firing and the shrieks of the unhappy men murdered.”

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Military affairs in the colony were in a turmoil. No one knew what to do. Young Washington looked on in consternation, feeling his inability to stem the tide. His friends sought to encourage him. Colonel Fairfax wrote: "Your good health and future are the toast of every table." And the Speaker of the House of Burgesses sent him this word:

"Our hopes, dear George, are all fixed on you."

But "dear George" had to have another reckoning with his mother. The four bullets which had passed through his coat pierced her mother-heart. Again she entreated him to give up running into constant danger. He wrote in reply:

"If it is in my power to avoid going to the Ohio again, I shall, but if the command is pressed upon me by the general voice of the country, and offered upon

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such terms as cannot be objected against, it would reflect dishonor upon me to refuse it.”

It is at least interesting to conjecture what might have become of the United States of America if George Washington had listened again to his mother's appeals to stay in safety on his Virginia plantation.

The foolish, crotchety, Scotch governor, Dinwiddie, mixed matters military very badly indeed, and subjected Colonel Washington to annoyances which he was not disposed to brook. So, to settle the question of the relative rank of colonial and crown officers, the handsome young colonel and his suite rode five hundred miles to Boston town to have the matter decided by General Shirley, commander-in-chief of all British forces in America.

In New York, Colonel Washington was taken to call on Mary Philipse, at

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that day the wealthiest heiress in America. A tall handsome man of twenty-three, courteous, dignified, careful in his dress, and really devoted to the fair sex, he was a highly eligible candidate for matrimonial honors. It is said that he proposed marriage to Miss Philipse, but that is not likely.

Though he was much sought after as a man of wealth and a hero, his natural delicacy and reserve would prevent him from proposing marriage to a comparative stranger, however attractive, and especially to a young heiress, as he might be the more suspected of entertaining mercenary motives.

The Virginia colonel was honored and feasted in Boston where his fame had preceded him. Governor Shirley's decision was in favor of him and of all colonial officers, making their rank equal to those of the same grade appointed by the crown. So Colonel

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Washington returned successful not only for himself but for his brother officers also.

While he was absent there was an Indian uprising on the western boundary of his command. After returning to Mount Vernon the commander-in-chief, hurrying to the frontier, was met by a company of men and women driven from their homes by the savages. Of these he wrote in terms reflecting rare credit upon the martyr spirit of a military officer of twenty-six:

“I am too little acquainted with pathetic language to attempt a description of the people’s distress but I would be a willing offering to savage fury and die by inches to save a people.”

While riding to and fro between Williamsburg and Winchester, his frontier headquarters, he met at her estate known as “White House,” Mrs. Martha Dandridge Custis, the young widow of

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a wealthy planter and merchant. The courtship progressed as rapidly as possible in those decorous days, so that when Washington was called to lead an expedition to regain possession of Fort Duquesne, at the forks of the Ohio, he penned this hasty note to his betrothed:

“We have begun our march to the Ohio. A courier is starting for Williamsburg, and I embrace this opportunity to send a few words to one whose life is now inseparable from mine.

“Since that happy hour when we made our pledges to each other, my thoughts have been continually going to you as another self. That an All-powerful Providence may keep us both in safety is the prayer of your ever faithful and affectionate friend,

“G<sup>o</sup> WASHINGTON.”

They found Fort Duquesne deserted and destroyed by fire. Planting the

## **“HEART OF MY HEART”**

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Union Jack on the blackened ruins, Washington returned home to prepare for his marriage. The wedding took place in an English chapel near Mrs. Custis's estate. The bride was known as the wealthiest and most beautiful woman in all Virginia. She was dressed with great elegance, in silk, satin and rare jewels. The groom was dressed in blue and silver with scarlet trimmings, with gold buckles at his knees and on his shoes. He rode beside her coach-and-six on horseback, and the wedding party made a brilliant and stately cavalcade as it climbed the hill under the tall elms of Mount Vernon to the veranda overlooking the broad Potomac.

## BENEDICT AND PLANTER

Colonel Washington now thought his fighting days were over. For sixteen years he was the happy benedict and Virginia planter, looking after the details of his vast estates and taking care of his wife's great interests. He was soon elected to the House of Burgesses, one of the first representative bodies in America. On taking his seat in that august body, the Speaker took occasion to thank him for his splendid services to his country. Colonel Washington rose to respond, and stood, blushing and stammering, until the Speaker relieved him by saying:

“Sit down, Mr. Washington. Your modesty equals your valor, and that sur-

## BENEDICT AND PLANTER

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passes the power of any language I possess."

Letters are still preserved in which Washington writes for sugar plums for little Martha, or "Patsy" Custis, who died while a young girl. Papa Washington, who never had any children of his own, was a kind, indulgent step-father. He was also a good friend and neighbor. He looked after everything himself, usually riding a round of fifteen miles a day, doing his duty faithfully as overseer and manager. Besides all these and his social duties, for he was now a bright and shining light among the "First Families of Virginia," he looked after the interests of the soldiers who had been under his command.

One man, a major who had been reproved for cowardice at Great Meadows, thought he had been omitted from the distribution of land given by the

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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government to all who had participated in that campaign, and wrote Washington an insulting letter about it. The Colonel's reply was vigorous:

"Your impertinent letter was delivered to me yesterday. As I am not accustomed to receive such from any man, nor would have taken such language from you personally without letting you feel some marks of my resentment, I would advise you to be cautious in writing me a second of the same tenor. But for your stupidity and sottishness you might have known, by attending to a public gazette, that you had your full quantity of ten thousand acres of land allotted you. But suppose you had fallen short, do you think your superlative merit entitles you to a greater indulgence than others?

"All my concern is that I ever engaged in behalf of so ungrateful a fellow as you are."

## CONGRESS AND COMMANDER

Not content with insulting the colonies with her stupid arrogance, England began to lay her plans to force them to pay a share of the enormous expense of the Seven Years' War abroad,—besides that involved in defending her own borders.

The passing of the Stamp Act lashed the troubled waters of America into such fury that it was repealed to save the Ship of State. Then minor taxes were levied—on paint, glass, etc.—then on tea. It was not the amount but the principle of the thing that the colonists minded—the slavery of taxation without having any say in the matter, as if the colonists were mere children or slaves.

Patrick Henry, a Virginia neighbor,

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sounded the war cry, “Give me liberty or give me death,” which spread over all the colonies as rapidly as a prairie fire.

Beneath his imputed coldness, the love of liberty burned at white heat in Washington’s passionate heart. Usually a silent man in public deliberations, he arose in a convention assembled at Williamsburg to take action upon the English attempt to starve rebellious Boston into submission. His utterance on this occasion was pronounced “the most eloquent speech ever made.” With a diffidence almost painful he stammered:

“I will raise a thousand men, subsist them at my own expense, and march them to the relief of Boston.”

Colonel Washington was elected a delegate to the first Continental Congress at Philadelphia. He attended the meetings, a silent spectator and adviser, tiptoeing about in his Colonel’s uniform,

## CONGRESS AND COMMANDER

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but he was pointed out as the famous Virginia planter who had done heroic things for his country, and reputed to be one of the richest men in America.

While listening mechanically to John Adams's speech one memorable day, not dreaming of its import, he was startled by hearing his own name, followed by the motion that he be made Commander-in-chief of the Continental forces. In a sudden accession of shyness he jumped up and rushed out of the room. In spite of his modesty he was unanimously elected.

As General Washington, the Commander-in-chief, he did not have to appease his mother, but there was his wife, Martha. His first thought was of her, and sitting down immediately after leaving the Congress he wrote at once to break the painful news to her:

“You may believe me, my dear Patsy, when I assure you that, so far from

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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seeking this appointment, I have used every endeavor in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part with you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my capacity, and that I should enjoy more real happiness in one month with you at home than I have the most distant prospect of finding abroad, if my stay were to be seven times seven years.

“I shall feel no pain from the toil and dangers of the campaign; my unhappiness will flow from the uneasiness I know you will feel from being left alone.”

Two days after Washington’s appointment in Philadelphia, the battle of Bunker Hill was fought near Boston. On his way there, escorted by a troop of horsemen, he met a messenger bringing the news to Congress.

## CONGRESS AND COMMANDER

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“Did our provincials stand the fire of the regular troops?” he asked anxiously.

“That they did, and held their own fire in reserve until the enemy was within eight rods.”

“Then the liberties of the country are safe!” he exclaimed.

General Washington took command on Cambridge Common. One writing of that time describes him as follows:

“A gallant soldier he was. Under the Cambridge elm that warm July morning, he was what we call an imposing figure. He was tall, stalwart and erect, with thick brown hair drawn back into a queue, as all gentlemen then wore it, with a rosy face and a clear, bright eye—a strong, a healthy, a splendid-looking man in his uniform of blue and buff, an epaulet on each shoulder; and in his three-cornered hat, the cockade of liberty.”

Washington’s command was a mot-

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ley mob of everything but soldiers, as in the children's button charm, which begins: "Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief, doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief, tinker, tailor"—and farmer, instead of "soldier, sailor"—and on through the childish lingo. As to the officers, the commander-in-chief himself wrote that they were often mere politicians who let their men do as they pleased.

One day that summer he found a Virginia and a Marblehead company in something like a riot. An eye-witness relates:

"The General threw the bridle of his horse into his servant's hands, and, rushing into the thickest of the fight, seized two tall, brawny riflemen by the throats, keeping them at arms' length, talking to, and shaking them."

After getting the men in order and the siege fortifications under way,

## CONGRESS AND COMMANDER

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Washington discovered, to his great consternation, that there had been a terrible oversight and his soldiers had only nine rounds of ammunition apiece.

This was appalling! What if the British should sally forth from Boston and attack them? Without daring to tell a soul of it, he secretly detached men to scour the country for gunpowder, even sending a fast ship to Bermuda to seize a supply he had heard was stored there. Meanwhile before the army he kept up a game of bluff in which he was an adept.

While suffering this fearful apprehension, General Washington happened to see from an upper window "Old Put," as bluff General Putnam was called, approaching headquarters with a big, fat woman he had taken prisoner as a spy, astride his horse in front of him.

General Putnam's serious face, while

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bringing such a prisoner of war, appealed to Washington's sense of humor so that he laughed, as he often did, till the tears ran down his cheeks. Yet when "Old Put" arrived and presented the creature, the superior officer's face was a model of gravity. This incident served to relieve the terrible tension of those long weeks of suspense.

On the first of January, 1776, Washington raised, over his headquarters in Cambridge, the flag of the United Colonies, consisting of thirteen red and white stripes for the thirteen colonies and the British double cross in the canton, showing that the people were then fighting for their rights as subjects of the crown, and not for separation from the Mother Country. At that time the king's speech was being promulgated in Boston containing insulting threats for the rebels in arms against their sovereign. Of this Washington wrote:

## CONGRESS AND COMMANDER

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“Before the proclamation came to hand we had hoisted the Union flag in compliment to the United Colonies. But behold! It was received in Boston as a token of the deep impression the speech had made upon us, and as a signal of submission.

“By this time, I presume they begin to think it strange we have not made a formal surrender of our lives!”

Those ragged regiments under the patient masterfulness of their commander-in-chief slowly tightened the coil around Boston, and when they had acquired powder enough, they bombarded it and drove the British out of the city. The British leaders were at a theater witnessing a burlesque on “the cowardice of the Yankees,” when the cannonading began.

Edward Everett Hale, “the first citizen of Boston” a century later, told a story of Washington, after his entry

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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into that city, and while staying at a tavern which General Howe had made his headquarters. Always fond of children, he made a pet of the inn-keeper's daughter. Holding the little girl on his knee, General Washington asked her:

“Now that you have seen the soldiers on both sides, which do you like the best?”

The child, who, like himself, could not tell a lie, replied:

“I like the ‘red-coats’ best.”

This answer made the General laugh and he said, indulgently:

“Yes, my dear, the red-coats do look the best, but it takes the ragged boys to do the fighting.”

After the evacuation of Boston, General Washington wrote to “dear Jack:”

“The want of arms and powder is not peculiar to Virginia. This country, of

## CONGRESS AND COMMANDER

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which doubtless you have heard large and flattering accounts, is more deficient in both than you can conceive and I have been obliged to submit to all the insults of the enemy's cannon for want of powder, keeping what little we had for pistol distance.

"I believe I may with truth affirm that no man, perhaps, ever commanded under more difficult circumstances. To enumerate the circumstances would fill a volume. . . .

"As I am now nearly at my eighth page, I think it time to conclude; especially as I set out with prefacing the little time I had for friendly correspondences. I shall only add, therefore, my affectionate regards to my sister and the children, and compliments to friends; and that I am, with every sentiment of true affection, your loving brother and faithful friend,

"GEORGE."

## THE FLAG AND THE DECLARATION

Washington was not like an Indian, who likes to remain and gorge or gloat over his great victory. His work in New England was done. He lost no time in sending his army to the next scene of conflict, New York.

Even here he had to take command of a "badly armed, undisciplined, disorderly rabble." Most of the troops there were an aggregation of farmers and militia, armed only with the guns they happened to have in their homes.

Soon after arriving in New York, General Washington was invited by John Hancock, still president of the Continental Congress, to come to Philadelphia and consult with the leaders

## THE DECLARATION

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about breaking with and separating from the Mother Country.

It was during this advisory visit that Washington was appointed chairman of a secret committee to devise a standard to take the place of the flag of the United Colonies. It was appropriate that this should be assigned to him, but as he was not then a member of the Congress, no record was made of the matter.

The story of Betsy Ross, the little Quaker upholsterer and seamstress, has been confirmed. General Washington called at her little home with Robert Morris and George Ross to order the first flag made in case the Congress should pass a resolution making thirteen States of the thirteen Colonies. The design he showed the buxom widow contained thirteen six-pointed white stars in a circle on a blue field, to take the place of the British union of crosses.

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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The stripes remained the same as in the United Colonies flag. Mrs. Ross's account of the changing of the design, from the six-pointed British star to a five-pointed star, which was original and easier to cut, must have been correct.

It is sometimes stated that Washington modified his own family coat-of-arms for the Flag of the United States. The resemblance is too far-fetched, especially considering that he had six-pointed stars in his design at first. The colonies were revolting against a monarchy, with all its heraldry and hereditary titles, and Washington was not the kind of man to foist his own family crest upon a new nation.

Also this flag was to be the first banner of the people—the standard of liberty—and citizens were to be free to arrange the stars as they chose, in token of popular liberties. Washington expressed his own beautiful sentiment con-

## THE DECLARATION

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cerning the Flag, which in itself should prove that he had no thought of his own family coat-of-arms:

“We take the star from Heaven, the red from our Mother Country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down to posterity representing liberty.”

General Washington returned to his headquarters at New York, June 6th, so he had no part in the historic scenes of the Congress when debating, passing, and signing the Declaration of Independence; but he did more than any man there to make the United States of America a free and independent nation.

While he was in New York waiting for action, a plot to kidnap him was frustrated, and Thomas Hickey, the treacherous member of his guard, was tried by court martial and hanged in the presence of twenty thousand spectators

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for his “most barbarous and infernal plot.”

After the proclamation of the Declaration of Independence in the leading cities, the English king and his ministry began to see what a mistake they had made, and Lord Howe was authorized to open negotiations for some kind of a compromise. Not wishing to recognize Washington as anything but the leader of a mob of rebels, they addressed a letter to “Mr.” George Washington. This the General’s secretary would not receive. Then an officer appeared with a communication for “George Washington, Esq., etc., etc.” Though the officer was received with scrupulous courtesy, the letter was not accepted.

“But the ‘etc., etc.’ implies *everything*,” urged the official messenger.

“It may also mean *anything!*” said General Washington, with a hearty laugh.

## THE DECLARATION

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A gentleman at headquarters relates an example of the unfailing courtesy and good humor Washington manifested, whenever he could, toward his chief enemy.

“One day a fine sporting dog, which was evidently lost, came to ask for some dinner. On its collar were the words, *General Howe*. It was the British commander’s dog! It was sent back under a flag of truce, with the following note:

“‘General Washington to General Howe,—does himself the pleasure to return him a dog, which accidentally fell into his hands, and by the inscription on the collar, appears to belong to General Howe.’

“General Howe replied by a warm letter of thanks to this act of courtesy on the part of his enemy, our general.”

In spite of these little courtesies Washington wanted it distinctly under-

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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stood that the pardoning power of Lord Howe was too late and it was utterly useless to extend it, as the provincials were doing no wrong in fighting for their inalienable rights.

Those were “the times that try men’s souls,” and especially was the great soul of George Washington severely tested. Of his sore trials as commander-in-chief old John Adams, “the Father of the Revolution,” said at this time:

“It requires more serenity of temper, a deeper understanding, and more courage than fell to the lot of Marlborough, to ride in this whirlwind.”

## DEFEATS AND RETREATS

The American army, if it could be called such, had to defend too much territory against the superior and trained forces of the enemy. Defeat and capture seemed inevitable. But the troops fought heroically, and Washington, the subtle strategist, planned such masterly retreats that they proved, in the long run, to be victories.

The morning after the battle of Long Island the British General "put out his hand to take the nest of rebels," as he called it, "but the birds had flown." There had seemed to be no escape. Washington and his brave little army were surrounded and certain to be taken prisoners in the morning. That would end the war in favor of the British.

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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But a thick fog came up during the late August night. The General, always alert, seized the opportunity. Setting a company of Massachusetts fishermen and sailors to work, he got together all the river craft (rendered useless for other purposes by the fog) and effected their escape to the main land before the enemy suspected what was going on. Soon after this stroke of genius he wrote of his policy:

“It would be presumption to draw our young troops into open ground against their superiors both in number and discipline, and I have never spared the spade and pick-axe.”

This was the secret of Washington’s success. He knew how to use the means at hand. He had learned that often a spade is better than a bayonet, and a pick-axe more useful than a sword.

In September there was an encounter

## DEFEATS AND RETREATS

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with the British at Kip's Bay. Two or three of his regiments, panic-stricken, broke and started to run, but Washington, white with wrath, headed them off with pistols, threatening to shoot them, and striking them with the flat of his sword—so by frightening them more than all the British, he drove them back into their intrenchments.

There was a short, sharp, decisive skirmish at White Plains and another retreat. Then came the loss of Fort Washington with twenty-six hundred men and all the munitions of war. This was a catastrophe which meant irretrievable ruin to the cause of freedom in America.

Yet even this shattering of his hopes did not hurt his father-heart like seeing his beloved men wounded and dying. Before entering the hopeless battle of Long Island he had clenched teeth and fists, as he muttered to Heaven, “Good

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God, what brave fellows I must this day lose!" So here, helpless, on the opposite side of the Hudson, he stood watching the fortunes of war through a spy-glass, crying out and sobbing as he saw the British cutting and slashing his dear soldiers with their bayonets until, tear-blinded and heartsick, he could see no more. Yet the Father of His Country is known to millions of his children as cold, distant, and pompous like a statue of stone or ice!

## TURNING THE TIDE

Heroic manhood is but one form of that eternal verity which, “crushed to earth, will rise again.” Truth, in this case, had to get up and run, for Washington is next seen flying across New Jersey at the head of the remnant of an army described as a “hopeless gang of tramps.” They were running away, hoping against hope that they might “live to fight another day.” Sometimes their pursuers were so close on their heels that they were entering a village at one side while Washington and his “ragged rebels” were leaving it at the other. Once they gained time by crossing the river and destroying all the boats, so that the British could not follow.

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One night a little girl in a house where Washington had found refuge begged to see the strange man harbored there for the night. The General smiled sadly at her curiosity, and said:

“Well, my dear, you see a very tired man in a *very* dirty shirt!”

As soon as he gained a little breathing space ahead of the British, Washington began to plan a side attack which might turn the tables and retrieve the fortunes of the Revolution. Staking all on a desperate throw, he sent a brief message, two days ahead, to Colonel Cadwalader, informing him that he was going to surprise and capture some hired Hessians by doing what seemed to be impossible —crossing the Delaware through a mass of great cakes of floating ice.

This was Washington’s order:

“Christmas Day at night, one hour before day, is the time fixed for the attempt on Trenton. For Heaven’s sake,

## TURNING THE TIDE

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keep this to yourself, as the discovery of it may prove fatal to us."

It was a desperately brilliant stroke. With "Victory or Death!" for the countersign, they crossed the river in a blinding storm. The surprise was complete, the battle was won and the tide of the Revolution was turned. Almost the only losses on the American side were those of men frozen to death on that bitter cold night. One of the prisoners taken at Trenton recorded of Washington that "His eyes have scarce any fire." How could they after his sleepless, haunting experiences, leading a tattered army which the enemy tracked by the blood spots left upon the snow by the soldiers' feet? No wonder those deep, serene, blue-gray eyes had lost their fire—yet the fervent fires in Washington's heart could not be extinguished.

The victory at Trenton was opportune. It had a tonic effect, not only

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on the commander-in-chief, but also on the men whose time would be up on the first of January, and who must be paid, especially if they were to be induced to reënlist. Coward Congress was giving up the struggle as hopeless. Not only was Washington fighting the British single-handed, but he was suffering more from the Congress than from the enemy. He had been paying the men out of his private fortune, and the Congress was more than willing he should.

But Washington, wealthy as he was, had no more money at command. In a new hope, born of the despair he had just escaped, he wrote to Robert Morris, known as "the financier of the Revolution," that the success of the cause depended on his having fifty thousand dollars by New Year's Day.

That staunch patriot arose early the next morning, went out and raised the

## TURNING THE TIDE

money on his private note and his sacred honor, sent it to Washington to save the day and the country, and promised his further support, personal as well as official.

There was joy in Washington's heart, and fire in his eye, when the men were paid off that memorable New Year's Day. Now there was hope for Liberty. The British general, Cornwallis, had followed and surrounded him at a bend in the Delaware, still filled with blocks of ice. Here another time the British retired at night sure of their prey. Cornwallis told some of his officers that they would "bag the old fox in the morning."

But "the old fox" was not to be caught napping. While Cornwallis was asleep he crept out and around the foe, beating part of the British force at Princeton, January 3, 1777, before the astounded British fox-hunter came up

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—then Washington was ready to fight him. The General alarmed his men and officers by dashing along in front within thirty yards of the British. One of his colonels rushed into the battle smoke after his chief. When the action was over, finding the General still un-hurt, he burst into tears and waved his hat, shouting: “Thank God your Excellency is safe!” Washington, always serene in the greatest danger, waved his hat in returning the loyal salute, and seizing the devoted officer by the hand he exclaimed:

“Away, my dear colonel, and bring up the troops—the day is our own!”

## IN THE VALLEY

The Congress, still wrangling and back-biting, failed to support the army in the field. In spite of his stout heart, even Robert Morris's resources were limited. On his way to fight Lord Howe, Washington called at Morris's office in Philadelphia. A clerk who was present told this story of their interview:

“‘Can you help us?’ pleaded the commander-in-chief in a voice husky with emotion.

“Morris shook his head sadly, saying: ‘I have used up my own means and credit. I am deeply grieved to admit that I can do nothing now—nothing!’

“General Washington, covering his face with his large hands, so that the

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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fingers touched his forehead, burst into an abandon of weeping, and as he sat there sobbing, the tears trickled through his fingers and dropped down his wrists. But he soon gained his normal composure, arose and went out without a word. Two days later, September 11, 1777, Washington met Lord Howe at Brandywine and was defeated."

The losing battle of Germantown followed on October 4th. Washington wrote of it to "Brother Jack":

"The anxiety you have been under on account of this army, I can easily conceive. Would to God there had been less cause for it!

"But for a thick fog, which rendered it so infinitely dark at times as not to distinguish friend from foe at the distance of thirty yards, we should, I believe, have made a glorious day of it. But Providence or some unaccountable

## IN THE VALLEY

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*something* designed it otherwise; for after we had driven the enemy a mile or two, after they were in the utmost confusion and flying before us in most places, after we were upon the point (as it appeared to everybody) of grasping a complete victory, our own troops took fright and fled in precipitation and disorder. . . .

“Our distress on account of clothing is great, and in a little time it must be very sensibly felt, unless some expedient can be hit upon to obtain them.

“P. S. I had scarce finished this letter, when by express from the State of New York I received the important and glorious news—of Burgoyne’s surrender at Saratoga.

“I most devoutly congratulate you, my country and every well-wisher to the cause, on this signal stroke of Providence.

“Yrs. as before” [GEORGE]

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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Their “great distress on account of clothing” was “very sensibly felt” during the “long and dreary winter” that followed at Valley Forge. Howe and the British were feasting and reveling in Philadelphia, a score of miles away, while many of Washington’s brave soldiers were dying of exposure and starvation.

Not enough were the physical hardships of that awful period, but a disposition of humankind was manifest, in Congress and elsewhere, to “kick him while he’s down!”

Washington’s noble generosity and self-sacrificing patriotism weighed little in the balance against the envy of his bitter enemies; he was also “hurt in the house of his friends.” Conspiracy was at its height when his fortunes were at their lowest. Jealous, ungrateful opposition to Washington reached its high-water mark in that hideous com-

## IN THE VALLEY

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bination of enmity and treachery known as the Conway Cabal.

While his hands were tied they lashed his quivering flesh. The purpose of the conspiracy was, as Washington himself said, "that General Gates was to be exalted on the ruin of my reputation and influence."

During those heart-rending hours the General, to the last a devout Churchman, sought refuge in prayer. Canon Sutherland has described him then:

"A show  
To the disdainful, heaven-blinded foe,  
Unlauded, unsupported, disobeyed,  
Thwarted, maligned, conspired against, betrayed,  
Yet nothing could unheart him. Wouldest thou  
know

His secret? There, in that thicket on the snow  
Washington knelt before his God and prayed."

The cabal ended in an unexpected way. General Conway was shot in a duel, and thinking he had not long to live, made this supposed deathbed con-

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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fession in the form of a letter to Washington:

“PHILADELPHIA, 23d July, 1778.

“SIR:

“I find myself just able to hold a pen during a few minutes, and take the opportunity of expressing my sincere grief for having done, written, or said anything disagreeable to your Excellency. My career will soon be over, therefore justice and truth prompt me to declare my last sentiments. You are in my eyes the great and good man. May you long enjoy the love, veneration and esteem of these States, whose liberties you have asserted by your virtues.

“I am, with the greatest respect, &c.,

“THOMAS CONWAY.”

## **“WHOM CAN WE TRUST NOW?”**

After Valley Forge came the battle of Monmouth and the treachery of General Charles Lee, in whose honesty the commander-in-chief had reposed great faith. Lee had been a British prisoner and was lately released. Evidently he had bargained to deliver Washington and his army into the hands of the enemy. This battle seemed to suit his purpose. Instead of advancing to the attack, as commanded, he began to retreat.

The Rev. Dr. A. B. Hyde, late Vice-Chancellor of Denver University, Colorado, told the writer of his grandfather, who was with General Washington from Cambridge to Yorktown:

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“At the battle of Monmouth Grandfather Hinckley was hardly ten yards from the spot where Washington, coming upon the scene, met Lee retreating.

“‘General Lee, you have disobeyed my orders!’ came loud and clear from Washington’s lips.

“‘By God, I have not!’ yelled Lee.

“‘*By God, you have!* Go to the rear,’ thundered Washington, with face ablaze. Reforming with furious energy, he rescued and regained the day. Calm histories soften the incident. I give you what Grandfather Hinckley said he heard and saw.”

Though General Lee was disgraced, there were many, as is usual in such instances, who believed him innocent of any criminal intent, though there was no doubt of it in Washington’s mind. Eighty years afterward a document was discovered which proved that Lee was

## “WHOM CAN WE TRUST?”

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really trying to deliver Washington's command into the power of the enemy for a large bribe in British money and preferment.

The winter which followed in encampment near Morristown, New Jersey, exceeded the horrors, in some respects, of that at Valley Forge.

Lafayette returned to France to join forces with the French friends of liberty and helped Franklin and his colleagues in raising “sinews of war” for the struggle in the United States.

In the meantime Congress, petty and jealous, was afraid General Washington might use his too-great popularity to make himself military dictator, if not emperor of the United States. It was objected by that legislative body:

“That his influence was already too great; that even his virtues afforded motives for alarm; that the enthusiasm of

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the army joined to the kind of dictatorship already confided to him, put Congress and the United States at his mercy; that it was not expedient to expose a man of the highest virtue to such temptations."

Though his bitterest enemies in the Conway cabal had been discomfited, there were still many in and out of Congress who were hostile to Washington. Not all the people were patriots even in those good old days. Greed, graft, selfishness, and venality prevailed then, and ghouls stood like buzzards, ready to feed upon the apparently dying cause.

Then came the treason of Arnold, who had served his country with signal bravery.

This stung the heart of his friend, the commander-in-chief. When the dispatch was handed to him it is said that he read it and clasped his hands

## “WHOM CAN WE TRUST?”

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above his head as he exclaimed, in anguish of spirit:

“Whom can we trust now?”

But the emotion passed quickly, and Washington was again the stern, inflexible general, ordering and planning to capture the traitor and bring his British confederate, the brilliant and attractive young André, to justice. Arnold made his escape to the British and André was executed, as the British had hanged young Nathan Hale, an American patriot and spy. Yet sentimentalists made a great hue and cry over Washington’s hardness of heart in not sparing young André, and a so-called poetess wrote some vitriolic verses beginning, “Remorseless Washington!”

## “GONE TO CATCH CORNWALLIS”

Gates, the general favored by Congress, was sent south to stop the British ravages and outrages there. He failed signally, as Washington knew he would. Meanwhile, glad tidings came from Lafayette that France was to send soldiers, ships, and treasure in aid of the cause of liberty. But the promised French aid was a long time on the way. Washington, chained to the neighborhood of New York to watch Sir Henry Clinton, was kept in constant torture, hearing of the lingering *fiasco* in the South. On learning that his nephew, then in charge of Mount Vernon, had offered the British soldiers and sailors comfort and refreshment to save that beautiful estate, he wrote:

## “TO CATCH CORNWALLIS”

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“Dear Lund: It would have been a less painful circumstance to me to have heard that, in consequence of your non-compliance with their request, they had burnt my house and laid the plantation in ruins.”

At last word came that the French fleet would soon be in Virginia waters, and Washington stole away from his post near New York. He was well on his way to Virginia before Clinton missed him. As he and his men passed quickly through Philadelphia, the people cheered and shouted: “Long live Washington! He has gone to catch Cornwallis in his mouse-trap!”

The French met and coöperated with Washington by land and sea, and Cornwallis was trapped in Yorktown. After a long bombardment Cornwallis surrendered, in October, 1781. The British troops marched out to the tune of “The World Turned Upside Down.”

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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At the time of the capitulation Washington announced to the American troops:

“My brave fellows, let no sense of satisfaction for the triumphs you have gained induce you to insult your fallen enemy. Let no shouting, no clamorous huzzahing increase their mortification. It is sufficient for us that we witness their humiliation. Posterity will huzzah for us.”

Men are learning in these last days to love their enemies and how to “do unto others,” but George Washington was a Knight of the Great Heart in the eighteenth century. Not only did he refuse to humiliate Cornwallis by requiring him to surrender his sword, but he gave a dinner in honor of his British prisoner. In courtesy to his distinguished guest this toast had to be proposed, “The King of England,” which Washington did with becoming gravity

## “TO CATCH CORNWALLIS”

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—adding a sentiment of his own, in an undertone, “May he *stay* there!” with such a mischievous expression that even Cornwallis laughed, and became his captor’s friend for the rest of his life.

Through the thirteen States, the watchmen on their rounds, after swift messengers arrived from Yorktown, making their usual midnight announcement in the frosty air: “Twelve o’clock and all is well,” added “and *Cornwallis is taken!*”

Among those who received the signal tidings about the man he had loved, encouraged and aided in earlier days, was Lord Fairfax, who remained a staunch Tory to the end. The feeble old man was so bitterly out of sympathy with his former *protégé* that, when he heard of the surrender of the British, he called to his colored body-servant:

“Come, Joe, carry me to bed, for it is high time for me to die!”

## **“THE BITTER END”**

General Washington had to turn away from the rejoicings of victory and make haste to the bedside of his stepson, Jack Custis, who was dying of consumption. Beside the deathbed he adopted Jack's two little children, Nelly Custis, afterward “the daughter of the nation,” and George Washington Parke Custis, who has left valuable recollections of his foster-father's life.

American independence was tacitly won, but peace was delayed by the slow means of locomotion of that day, and tedious forms which had to be gone through. Yet there were triumphant celebrations in all the centers of the new nation. A grand ball was given in General Washington's honor at Fred-

## “THE BITTER END”

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ericksburg, where his old mother lived, having moved into town from Ferry Farm. He had provided a comfortable home for her, as she was too exacting to live with any of her children. She took a querulous pride in having it understood that whatever others might think of her illustrious son, he was no better than he ought to be, so she could not quite approve of him. Also, that he did not provide liberally out of his great wealth for his mother! This annoyed Washington exceedingly and was the subject of several exasperated letters, couched in stately terms, beginning with “Honour’d Madam,” and closing with “Your affectionate son, George.”

In one of them he gently explained to her why he could not have her come to live at Mount Vernon, where she would have to change her dress often—which she hated—and where his wife, Martha, would brook no domineering.

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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The dear old lady could never quite forgive her son George for refusing to allow her to manage his whole life for him.

Perhaps the adulation Washington appreciated most was that of Congress, which had been harder to conquer than the British. He had the satisfaction of seeing that august and obdurate body at his feet.

But the end was not yet. Washington had to go to Newburg. The British were still in New York and his discontented army was too weak to drive them out. Peace was under slow and painful negotiation and there was still no assurance that the articles would ever be signed. The British commissioners were foolish and arrogant. It was their nature. The king was almost insane and his hatred of Americans became monomania. Dr. Franklin and his colleagues in Europe had to exercise cour-

## **“THE BITTER END”**

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age, patience, and strategy similar to those practised by the commander-in-chief for six years in America. It took more than a year after Yorktown to conclude the peace. During this time “the temper of the army” was, as Washington described it, “very much soured.” They lived on poor fare and did not receive their pay, even in depreciated continental money, of which the value had fallen so low as to originate the contemptuous phrase, “Not worth a continental!” They were finally paid out of money sent from France.

Afterward, realizing how much Washington had done for the country and how weak and ineffectual the government seemed to be, the representative of a large number of soldiers and citizens sent him a letter proposing to make him dictator, or even emperor, if he would accept the honor. The republican experiment had not yet been

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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tried successfully anywhere and people could not help believing that any other form of government than a monarchy must end in failure.

Washington, instead of feeling flattered, wrote an indignant reply, in part as follows:

“I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address which seems to me big with the greatest mischiefs that can befall my country. You could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable.”

At last the tidings of the signing of the treaty came, and the war was actually at an end. The next day, April 19, 1783, was the eighth anniversary of the first battle of the war. A solemn celebration was held, at which a short hymn, entitled “Independence,” was sung, of which this was the ringing refrain:

## “THE BITTER END”

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“No king but God!  
No king but God!”

Still there were many details for the commander-in-chief to arrange before leaving the army, to live quietly at home—a boon he had not known for eight years. During all that time of peril and privation he had sighed constantly for Mount Vernon, wife and home, peace and happiness—to him an earthly paradise.

It was in Fraunces' tavern, near Whitehall Ferry, New York City, that General Washington took final leave of his companions in arms and partners in distress. Choking with emotion, he could not speak at first. Controlling his voice by a supreme effort, he began:

“With a heart full of love and gratitude I take my leave of you, most devoutly wishing that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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your former ones have been glorious and honorable."

Then there was a suffocating pause before he could go on:

"I cannot come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged to you if each will come and take me by the hand."

His adopted son describes this scene: "Knox, who stood nearest to him, turned and grasped his hand, and, while the tears flowed down the cheeks of each, the commander-in-chief kissed him. This he did to each of his officers while tears and sobs stifled utterance."

A spectator tells of his departure from Whitehall slip:

"There he got into a barge. As he rode away he stood up and lifted his hat. All of us uncovered and remained thus till he passed from sight to be seen no more by many of those who gazed sadly after his retreating form."

## **“THE BITTER END”**

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The next step was to resign his commission before Congress, then in session at Annapolis, and render his account to the government. This was for moneys advanced by him in those immortal eight years to facilitate the movements of the army, over and above the expenses he had pledged beforehand in that “eloquent” speech. It amounted to nearly one hundred thousand dollars! Greatness is not to be measured in money terms. Washington’s bill seems contemptibly small from a merely financial point of view, but his credits in the reckoning were items of sublime import to American patriotism. He gave his own services to his country also, “without money and without price.”

A great Englishman afterward showed the striking contrast between George, about-to-be crowned king of England, and that greater George, the uncrowned emperor in America:

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“Which was the most splendid spectacle ever witnessed, the opening feast of Prince George in London, or the resignation of Washington? Which is the most noble character for after ages to admire—yon fribble dancing in laces and spangles, or yonder hero who sheathes his sword after a life of spotless honor, a purity unreproached, a courage indomitable, and a consummate victory?”

But sweeter than all this and far more to his credit, was the reply of Congress to his valedictory address. It was a noble testimonial—all that the retiring general could have wished, and was delivered by a former bitter enemy—one of the Conway cabal!

As for the General who had been so unjustly attacked while he needed all this appreciation—he had a devoted, forgiving heart, and “an angel might have envied his feelings.”

## LAUNCHING HIS OWN SHIP

It was a happy home-coming for Washington, that Christmas Eve of 1783. It was his first chance to "sit down" in eight long years of hardship, exposure, hatred, and calumny "under his own vine and fig-tree." He had looked forward to this with almost hopeless longing through all the dark hours of the Revolution.

Jack's children, Washington and Nelly Custis, were small enough to remind him of his first home-coming as a young benedict, twenty-four years before. He had the greatest reason to be happy. He had made and saved his country, and forced even those who had hated him to admit it. Although Von Moltke, himself a master, has called Washington one of the world's greatest

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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strategists, it was not by his battles that he won the Revolution. It was by what he was and what he did during the lingering intervals while, hampered by mutiny, tortured by calumny, stabbed in the back by a dozen Brutuses, he kept on planning, working, hoping, praying. Thrice armed by the justice of his quarrel, he went on “in the teeth of clench’d antagonisms to follow out the noblest till he die.” He was ready to die and expected to, but he won. Relieved now of public cares and responsibilities, he was once more a private citizen in his own home. This alone made him as happy as a man just out of prison.

As an illustrious follower of the plow, he became head of the Order of the Cincinnati, and Mount Vernon became a Mecca for the world, the home of “the Cincinnatus of the West.”

After years of mismanagement, his own liberality, and the natural depre-

## LAUNCHING HIS OWN SHIP

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ciation due to the long war, his fortune was shattered, and Washington found his estate badly in debt. Though he died the second richest man in America, he was not rich at the end of the Revolution. But he addressed himself to retrieve his dissipated wealth with the same determination that had set him to work besieging Boston and bombarding Yorktown.

Ordinary problems and duties were a pleasure to him. He rode a round of fifteen miles a day superintending his Mount Vernon estate. He had a wonderful head for details, whether in ordering his own clothes or his wife's, or a spinet or sugar plums for the children. He wrote long letters every day and copied them by hand. He even wrote formal letters for his wife, who was not a highly educated woman, and she copied them faithfully, his bad spelling and all!

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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He was land poor—owning vast tracts of country in different States, some of them discovered in his young surveying years. He developed these resources, selling thousands of acres here and there to pay debts on the home plantation. So carefully did he look after the different departments of work on his estates that it was said the brand of George Washington's mill on a flour barrel was recognized even in England as the surest mark of excellence.

As there was no inn nearer than Alexandria, the Washingtons had to entertain as many guests as an ordinary country hotel. They were often imposed upon, but they had rather suffer than be found failing in hospitality. Representatives of foreign potentates came to see "the Sage of Mount Vernon." The king of Spain, anxious to do honor to Washington, sent him a pair of donkeys of high degree. Of

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this gift the “jack” greatly amused the General. He referred to it several times in his correspondence—once at least to Lafayette. Why should His Majesty consider a royal jackass an appropriate present to send him? Was there anything invidious in this? He would like to name the solemn little beast for the giver, if he dared. He called the animal “Royal Gift.”

Yet after all he had done for his country, Washington could not be spared. The States still had rival rights and divided interests. They were jealous of one another. He wrote to Madison that the separate States “were thirteen sovereignties pulling against each other.” There must be some bond to unite all in common interest—to make them, in fact as well as in name, *United States*.

After four years of private life and happiness, Washington was elected

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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president of a convention to formulate a constitution to be adopted by all the States. He was loath to leave home, but where his country called he always went. It was a long, hard task, but he did his work well. Washington's word was law until the Constitution of the United States superseded it.

To him it was a terrible penalty he paid—being elected first President of the United States! The election was unanimous and he had to accept. He was to have been inaugurated on the 4th of March, 1789, but Congress was delayed in getting together to complete his formal election, so he could not be notified legally until the 16th of April.

Of this he wrote to General Knox:

“The delay may be compared to a reprieve; for in confidence I tell you (in the world it would obtain little credit) that my movements to the chair of government will be accompanied by

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feelings not unlike those of a culprit who is going to the place of execution."

His mother, in her eighty-second year, was known to be dying of cancer. Her son, the President-elect, called to say good-by. Both knew it was their last meeting. The adopted son, Washington Custis, gives this rather grandiloquent description of the final leave-taking:

"The President was deeply affected. His head rested upon the shoulder of his parent, whose aged arm feebly yet fondly encircled his neck. That brow, on which fame had wreathed the purest laurel virtue ever gave to created man, relaxed from its awful bearing. That look, which could have awed a Roman senate in its Fabrician day, was bent in filial tenderness upon the time-worn features of the aged matron. He wept."

## **HEART OF WASHINGTON**

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Washington made this sad entry in his diary for the 16th of April, 1789:

“About ten o’clock I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity, and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations.”

The first President-elect’s way to New York was strewn with verses and flowers, and allegoric ceremonies by beautiful girls in white. On his arrival in New York he was greeted with an ovation. His inauguration was still delayed to determine certain formalities—what his title should be, and so on. A number of authorities thought the President should be referred to as “High Mightiness,” like a king’s “Majesty.” But better sense prevailed.

## LAUNCHING HIS OWN SHIP

Everything about the republican form of government was new and strange.

Washington took the oath of office on the 30th of April, 1789, on the balcony of Federal Hall, corner of Wall and Nassau streets. Then the judge who administered the oath raised his hand and announced him to the waiting crowd in the street below. A flag was run up over the cupola of the building, bells were rung, cannon boomed, and the people shouted:

“Long live George Washington, President of the United States!”

There was much disagreement as to the proper forms and etiquette for the President and his wife. Many thought royal “drawing rooms” should be held. Others went to the opposite extreme. There were many then, as now, who criticized whatever was decided upon. President Washington gained the reputation of being grave, cold, distant, and

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formal. Much of this was due to diffidence, and more to bad dentistry. He suffered constantly with toothache, and sometimes appeared at public functions with his face so badly swollen that one eye was closed. After he had his teeth extracted and an artificial plate made, it fitted him so badly that it fell down whenever he laughed. This, in addition to his sufferings, must have discouraged his native mirthfulness.

The President formed a cabinet of the greatest men of his day. Jefferson was Secretary of State, and Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury. They were men of opposite temperaments, and though each was greatest in his own line, they were inordinately jealous of each other, and kept the good President in hot water all the time.

Then President Washington was taken with a desperate illness—a virulent attack of anthrax—and had to sub-

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mit to a critical surgical operation. His life was despaired of. One day he asked the doctor if he was going to die. "Do not flatter me with vain hopes," he said serenely, "I am not afraid to die. I can bear the worst." The physician expressed only a hope that his distinguished patient might recover. The President replied cheerfully: "Whether to-night or twenty years hence, makes no difference. I know I am in the hands of a good Providence."

While his condition was most critical his mother died, and they dared not tell him till he was safe on the road to recovery.

Washington's life had always been in the open, and he found the confinement of the presidency exceedingly irksome and detrimental to his health, so he spent much time traveling about and visiting the States. The reverence and esteem in which he was held, and his

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diplomacy and popularity, had the effect of uniting the different States as though he were a living embodiment of the Constitution.

The national capital was removed to Philadelphia, then the largest city in the United States, and nearer the center of the thirteen States than was New York. There were two opposing influences at work—one favoring some sort of alliance with England, and the other sympathizing with the French, then in the midst of their hideous “Reign of Terror.” As the French had aided the United States in defeating Great Britain and securing independence, many believed the failure of the United States to reciprocate was ungrateful if not treacherous. “Neutrality is desertion,” they said. But Washington and his party saw that the men who aided America were being murdered in the name of liberty by the

## LAUNCHING HIS OWN SHIP

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terrible mobs of the French Revolution.

During Washington's second term the so-called "Jay Treaty" was made with England. Many were so enraged that John Adams, the Vice-president, wrote:

"Ten thousand people in the streets of Philadelphia, day after day, threatened to drag Washington out of his house, and effect a revolution in the government, or compel it to declare in favor of the French Revolution against England."

Washington was not to be intimidated. He was true to what he believed to be right, without the slightest wavering. The world and history have long since agreed that the first President was right. The only thing that seemed to disturb his serenity was having his orders disobeyed or being unjustly attacked in the newspapers. When accused of trying to make him-

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self king, President Washington flew into a violent rage and Jefferson reported him to have said “that he had rather be in his grave than in his present situation; that he had rather be on his farm than to be made *Emperor of the World*; that he could see in this nothing but an impudent design to insult him.”

In spite of his calm exterior, Washington was nervous and sensitive to criticism. He complained once that “every act of my administration is tortured in such exaggerated and indecent terms as could scarcely be applied to a Nero, a notorious defaulter, or even a common pickpocket!”

So he was glad to decide that two terms were enough for any President, and to prepare his great “Farewell Address to the people of the United States” who were to know him through all time as the Father of his Country.

## LAUNCHING HIS OWN SHIP

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Of his delivery of his farewell before both Houses of Congress a spectator wrote:

“Profound silence greeted him as if the great assembly desired to hear him breathe. Mr. Adams (now President-elect) covered his face with both hands. Every now and then there was a suppressed sob.

“I cannot describe Washington’s appearance as I felt it—perfectly composed and self-possessed till the close of his address. Then when strong, nervous sobs broke loose, when tears covered the faces, then the great man was shaken. I never took my eyes from his face. Large drops came from his eyes. He looked as if his heart was with them, and would be to the end.”

There was a multitude who could not gain admission to hear the address but thronged him in the street—not a mob this time! This is described by an eye-

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witness: "The crowd followed him to his door; there, turning round, his countenance assumed a grave and almost melancholy expression, his eyes were bathed in tears, his emotions were too great for utterance, and only by his gestures could he indicate his thanks and convey his farewell blessing."

With these scenes of tenderness in mind, the other side of the picture may show what that kind old man had to endure from a no less source than his friend Franklin's grandson, in the *Aurora* newspaper, in the very next issue:

"If there ever was a period for rejoicing, this is the moment; every heart in unison with the freedom and happiness of the people ought to beat high with exultation that the name of Washington from this day ceases to give a currency to political iniquity, and to legalize corruption.

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“When a retrospect is taken of Washington’s administration for eight years, it is a subject of the greatest astonishment that a single individual should have cankered the principles of republicanism in an enlightened people just emerging from the gulf of despotism, and should have carried his designs against the public liberty so far as to put in jeopardy its very existence. Such, however, are the facts, and with these staring us in the face, this day ought to be a JUBILEE in the United States.”

And there were thousands who read this tirade with pleasure!

## “HOME AGAIN, HOME AGAIN!”

Although Washington returned to private life and was relieved of the cares of state, he did not live at ease. He worked so hard overseeing the plantation and kept up such a great volume of correspondence that General Harry Lee remarked to him:

“We are amazed, sir, at the vast amount of work you get through.”

Washington replied, “I rise at four o’clock, and a great deal of my work is done while others sleep.”

He was the soul of hospitality and delighted in surrounding himself with gay young people. He was fond of dancing, often indulging in every set during a whole evening. Sometimes, feeling that the others were overawed by his

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presence, he would forego the pleasure of dancing more than the opening minuet, bow formally and leave the room. Then he would slip behind an open door and watch the young folks through the crack, chuckling to himself while thinking of the pleasure he was sharing all unknown to them.

Nelly Custis, his adopted daughter, then a young lady, told how eagerly he entered into her pranks, playing practical jokes with the enthusiasm of a Sophomore. One of the last events in which he took a great interest was Nelly's wedding to his favorite nephew, Lawrence Lewis, his sister Betty's son.

He enjoyed facetious stories. On one occasion at dinner, Harry Lee made a remark which set Mrs. Washington laughing and a parrot perched by her began to laugh also.

“Ah, Lee, you are a funny fellow!”

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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exclaimed the master of Mount Vernon.  
“See, that bird is laughing at you.”

Once Washington wrote to Tobias Lear, his secretary:

“I am alone *at present*, and shall be glad to see you this evening. Unless some one pops in unexpectedly, Mrs. Washington and myself will do what I believe has not been done within the last twenty years by us—that is, to sit down to dinner *by ourselves*.

“Your affectionate  
“G. WASHINGTON.”

Jeremiah Smith, Chief Justice of New Hampshire, visited the Washingtions in 1797. He used to relate with great gusto the following incident concerning Judge Marshall, afterward Chief Justice of the United States:

“Judge Marshall and Judge Washington [the General’s nephew, Bushrod] were on their way to Mount Ver-

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non, attended by a servant who had the charge of a large portmanteau containing their clothes. At their last stopping place there happened to be a Scotch peddler, with a pack of goods which resembled their portmanteau. The roads were very dusty, and a little before reaching the General's, they, thinking it hardly respectful to present themselves as they were, stopped in a neighboring wood to change their clothes. The colored man got down the portmanteau, and just as they had prepared themselves for the new garments, out flew some fancy soap and other articles belonging to the peddler, whose goods had been brought on instead of their own. They were so struck by the consternation of their servant, and the ludicrousness of their own position, being there naked, that they burst into loud and repeated shouts of laughter.

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"Washington, who happened to be out upon his grounds near by, heard the noise, and came to see what might be the occasion of it, when, finding his friends in that strange plight, he was so overcome with laughter that he actually rolled upon the ground!"

A guest named Watson, who had business at Mount Vernon, was urged to stay there all night. Half sick with a cold, he hesitated, not wishing to remain, at such a disadvantage, under the roof of one so highly venerated. After going to bed he was astonished to see a stately figure in a long nightgown advancing slowly toward the bed, bringing him a bowl of herb tea. It was Washington himself.

The General often wrote letters until dark, answering all sorts of demands upon his time and courtesy—even reading a tedious manuscript to please a strange young lady who wished to know

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what he thought of it. As a “free horse” he was ridden almost to death.

During John Adams’s presidency preparations were made for removing the nation’s capital farther south, and a site on the Potomac was selected. At first it was known as the Federal City. The last interest which occupied the attention of Washington was the building of the “President’s Palace,” as he called the Executive Mansion. General Washington rode over from Mount Vernon almost daily to superintend the work, as if he were an architect’s foreman. It was a labor of love. No bridegroom could have been more interested in the construction of his future home than Washington was in the house designed to become the home of the nation.

There was a Scotchman, Davie Burns, living in a cottage between the site for “the palace” and the Potomac,

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and the stone for the building had to be hauled from a special wharf right across Burns's farm. The fact was that these very operations on land formerly owned by him made his remaining estate very valuable, but the man, ill-natured and obstinate, annoyed the workmen and hindered the work.

One day Washington remonstrated with Burns for this, reminding him that the Federal City and the President's Palace were making him a rich man, and remarking that, but for the selection of his land for this purpose, he would have lived out his days there "nothing but a poor tobacco planter."

Davie's Scotch was up in an instant. "Aye, mon," said he in great wrath, "and what *you* have been, Meesther Washington, if you hadn't merried the Weedow Custis with all her niggers? You'd be nothing but a land-surveyor to-day, *and a mighty poor one at that!*"

## “HOME AGAIN!”

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In 1798, the last full year of Washington's life, trouble seemed to be brewing with France and the old general and ex-President hastened to offer himself and his sword once more to the service of his country, saying in a noble note to President John Adams: “I should not intrench myself under the cover of age.”

Fortunately, because of the wisdom he had shown as President, when people insulted him and wanted to mob him for it, these military services were not needed. A mishap about this time proved his physical fitness for such a strenuous task. A mettlesome colt, in sudden fright, jumped sideways and threw him to the ground. The onlookers feared, from the violence of his fall, that the old General was badly hurt if not killed outright. No, indeed, not he! In spite of his great size and weight, that plucky old gentleman

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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jumped up and began brushing off his clothes—only expressing his deep disgust that he had allowed such a trivial thing to upset his equilibrium.

He always retained his passion for horses. Gilbert Stuart, who painted a number of portraits of Washington, including that by which he is recognized to-day, used to say that the only way to insure an animated expression on that tired old face was to talk to him about horses. Washington had led such an active, outdoor life that the least restraint was irksome to him. Of his distaste for the long portrait sittings then required, he himself humorously wrote:

“At first I was as restive under the operation as a colt is of the saddle. The next time I submitted very reluctantly, but with less flouncing. Now, no dray-horse moves more readily to his thill than I do to the painter’s chair!”

Washington was especially proud of “dear Brother Jack’s” son Bushrod, who became an eminent jurist, and of Betty’s son, Lawrence Lewis, whose marriage to his foster-daughter took place at beautiful Mount Vernon on its owner’s last birthday. He provided well for his brother Charles’s children. His eldest brother, Samuel, proved a ne’er-do-well, with a faculty for getting married and running into debt to satisfy five wives (whom he wedded in rapid succession), in addition to his own extravagances. He took advantage of his wealthier brother’s tenderness toward them all, and got loans often when it was “very inconvenient” for “dear George” to accommodate him. At last, when he was imposed upon beyond all forbearance, George wrote to Jack: “In God’s name, how did my brother Samuel get himself so enormously into debt?”

## HEART OF WASHINGTON

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After the brothers were dead he took kind care of their children, “lending” them large amounts of money and giving them, sometimes sternly, sometimes tenderly, the fatherly counsel they sorely needed. Samuel’s son Thornton followed in his father’s footsteps and received indulgent sums from “Uncle George,” who sent two more of Samuel’s sons to college, paying five thousand dollars—an extravagant amount for that day—for their education.

And Samuel’s daughter Harriot! She was the bane of her good uncle’s existence, with her careless, slatternly ways. He had her live at Mount Vernon, where she sometimes waxed affectionate in wheedling him into buying a new “pair of stays, shoes, gloves, and a hat.”

When his sister Betty appealed for a wedding trousseau for this exasperating niece, he replied: “She has no dis-

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position to be careful of her clothes, for they are dabbed about in every hole and corner, and her best things always in use.” Then he added, with a shrug and a helpless smile, “She costs me enough!”

In his will, Washington forgave quite a fortune of delinquencies on the part of relatives, near and distant, to whom he had been a sort of Santa Claus all their natural, and somewhat unnatural, lives.

On the 12th of December, 1799, he rode the rounds of his estate, paying no heed to a driving storm of snow and sleet. Taking cold, he was bled by an overseer. It was the worst thing to have done, but he gave the order, and the man obeyed as he would if he had been butchering a steer. Then three doctors came and bled him again. One of these was his life-long friend Dr. Craik, who attended him when, as a gen-

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eral's *aide*, with a high fever, he broke from the hospital tent and rode like the wind into battle against French and Indians, saving his men, even after Braddock had lost the day. The old general was not nearly so ill now as the young colonel was then.

Washington had had so many narrow escapes he was now sure he was "in the hour and article of death." In his old methodical way, he made all the final arrangements, as if he was going on a long-planned journey. To his faithful secretary, who was tenderly caring for his needs, he said:

"I am afraid I fatigue you too much.—Well, it is a debt we must pay to each other, and I hope when you want aid of this kind you will find it."

When old Dr. Craik called, he whispered, with many gasps: "Doctor, I die hard—but I am not—afraid to go.—I believed—from the—first attack—

## “HOME AGAIN!”

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that I should—not sur—vive it,—my breath—cannot—last long.”

Later that dear “gentleman of the old school” wheezed out his thanks to the three physicians who, with the best intentions in the world, had bled him to death, begging them:

“Take no more trouble about me.—Let me go off quietly— I cannot last —long.”

Tobias Lear, the old secretary, has recorded Washington’s last words:

“About ten o’clock [December 14, 1799] he made several attempts to speak to me before he could effect it; at length he said:

“ ‘I am just going. Have me decently buried; and do not let my body be put into the vault in less than three days after I am dead.’

“I bowed assent, for I could not speak. He then looked at me again and said:

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“ ‘Do you understand me?’

“I replied ‘yes.’

“ ‘ ‘ ‘Tis well,’ said he.

• • • • •

“While we were fixed in silent grief, Mrs. Washington (who was sitting at the foot of the bed) asked with a firm and collected voice, ‘Is he gone?’

“I could not speak, but held up my hand as a signal that he was no more.

“ ‘ ‘ ‘Tis well,’ said she in the same voice. ‘All is now over. I shall soon follow him. I have no more trials to pass through.’ ”













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